

# ANIMATION

# WORLD

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## MAGAZINE

Vol. 1 No. 9

**Interactive Animation**  
**Creative Capers**  
**Sierra On-Line**  
**Street Fighter**

**Michael Frierson on**  
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© Sierra On-Line





# EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

by Harvey Deneroff

## Interactive Animation

It was only a few years ago that the interactive revolution swept down on the animation industry almost overnight. All of a sudden, technology had allowed home video games to display real, albeit very limited animation. Multimedia computers were all the rage and it became de rigueur to have a fully loaded system for you home, either to play *Myst* or to allow the children to use *Math Blaster*.

Interactive companies sprung up all over the place. Unable or unwilling to hire animators in an increasingly tight labor market, interactive producers turned to conventional animation studios to handle the burgeoning demand for higher and higher quality animation.

The gold rush mentality that went along with this boom in interactive animation soon came tumbling down. However, while the interactive industry may have been bloodied, it still promises to remain a potent force in animation for some time to come. With these thoughts in mind, we thought it would be interesting to take a brief look in this issue at several facets of interactive animation, along with providing a venue for some thought on what the future holds from some of the industry's movers



and shakers.

First off, Andrew Zucker explores some of the implications of new technologies and markets on animation, from computer animation to the now ubiquitous CD-ROM in "New Media—A Ringside View of Trends in the Industry." Then, I waded into some of the problems and opportunities presented by interactive animation in my interview with Sue Shakespeare and Duane Loose in "Vioneering: Interactive Animation at Creative Capers," which also shows how one company deals with the onslaught of new technologies. In "Lettuce Entertain You: A Visit to Sierra On-Line" Judith Shane takes a not always serious look at what's going on at the Bellevue, Washington company, as some of the animation staff takes her through the process of creating the latest episode of the adults-only Leisure Suit Larry series.

One of the most visible signs of the influence of interactive animation has been the varying attempts to make both feature films and TV series based popular video games. In "Street Fighter—From Video Game to Anime," Brian Camp examines in considerable detail the various adaptations of the *Street Fighter* games in the United States and Japan, and what they reveal about the very real differences between American and Japanese approaches to filmmaking.

We end our look at interactive animation with "Interactive Trendlines," Frankie Kowalski's compilation of thoughts by a sampling of interactive animation executives representing both "old line" game/edutainment companies such as Davidson and Electronic Arts to newbies from animation's mainstream such as Film Roman and Rhythm & Hues.

It's too early to review Tim Burton's new live-action/animated feature, *Mars Attacks!*, but we thought we would celebrate the occasion with Michael Frierson's "Tim Burton's 'Vincent'—A Matter of Pastiche," which examines the director's first studio-made film. The article was adapted by Frierson from the manuscript of



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## ANIMATION WORLD MAGAZINE

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a forthcoming book on Burton. In "The Animated World of John Canemaker," Mike Lyons examines the multifaceted career of one of New York's most respected independent filmmakers, who constantly pushes the boundaries of what topics animation can deal with, as well as influencing a new generation of animators and scholars as teacher and historian.

With Linda Jones' "Through the Looking-Cel . . . er, Glass," we offer our first look at the burgeoning world of animation art. Jones was involved with some of the earliest efforts to establish a market for limited edition animation art and provides an eyewitness account of what she saw. In a somewhat related story, Frankie Kowalski takes a nostalgic peek back at one of her favorite films in "How The Grinch Stole Christmas . . . and My Heart" on the occasion of the celebration of the Chuck Jones classic's 30th anniversary celebration.

One of the things readers most frequently ask us about is animation schools, and which ones are the best. Unfortunately, it is often difficult to give very specific advice on this subject, but what we can do is start to provide profiles of some of the leading animation academies around the world. The first of these occasional pieces is provided herein by Philippe Moins in his "La Cambre, an Animation School in Brussels."

In our review section, Nedd Willard reports in from the latest edition of the Esphino Animation Festival in Portugal, while I take on *Space Jam*. And finally, Frankie Kowalski's Desert Island provides some feedback from a couple of interactive types, along with the two animation directors of *Space Jam*; while John R. Dilworth provides us with the latest installment of his *Dirby Birdy* comic strip.

### New Horizons

I would like to take this opportunity to announce that, starting with the next issue, Wendy Jackson, will be our new Associate Editor. An animator, animation historian and writer, Wendy promises to bring her unique energy, experience and imagination to the editorial side of the magazine. A graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design, she previously worked for ASIFA-Hollywood before joining AWN as its US Sales Representative.

I also want to thank Frankie Kowalski, our current Associate Editor, who is leaving to join the staff of Animation Magazine's World Animation Celebration to handle publicity and marketing. Frankie played a vital role in getting the magazine started and keeping it on an even keel once it got off the ground and wish her all the best in her job.

## A Ringside View of Trends in the Industry

by Andrew Zucker

It's 1996 and the world has had its first taste of so-called New Media, which, if one chose to listen to some of Hollywood, might already be called, "Old Media." But frankly, what we have witnessed is the first round of a championship bout between the Hollywood as it exists today and the industry of the future. Here is a copy of the latest "fight card" with descriptions of the blow-by-blow accounts.

**However, just when it looked like Pixar was on the ropes, the company and its well deserving creators scored a knockout with a well received public stock offering.**

### To The Future and Beyond!

As everyone who saw the feature length, computer animated *Toy Story* knew, this type of entertainment is exciting, novel and fun to watch and probably presents a serious threat to the status quo. Will it replace fine, Disney-style animation in the long run? Probably not. Why? Kids don't care what they watch. The parents do, and every holiday season, they will take their young'uns to see whatever it is that is served up hot and fresh—unless they were burnt in the past by a company which served up too much hype in advance of a mediocre product, such as *The Pagemaster*.

When Pixar sold *Toy Story* to Disney lock, stock and barrel, with no hope of receiving any backend

you public. Thank you Disney. Thank you Buzz Lightyear!



*Toy Story*  
© Disney Enterprises

participation (or so the story goes), the company knew it was giving away a tremendous product at a god awful price; but it also knew that using *Toy Story* as a loss leader could generate the name recognition, public support and credibility to allow them to make another feature.

However, just when it looked like Pixar was on the ropes, the company and its well deserving creators scored a knockout with a well received public stock offering. Thank

### 3D or Not 3D, That is the Question

Every year they trot out a couple of 40 year old plus professional boxers and these palookas go at it like they were fresh out of high school. Sure they are over the hill. Sure we feel bad for them. But, boy, they make lots of money and sure are fun to watch!

Many people regard Hollywood studios as aging dinosaurs looking for a place to fall down, kept alive by clinching their younger and less



experienced opponents until the latter give up the ghost, or until they consent to be permanent sparring partners. On the other hand, computer animation companies, such as RGA, Digital Domain, Metrolight, or Dream Quest Images, which are considered part of the genre of New Media, have all grown up in a

switching to lower priced personal computers (which has managed to keep up with SGI workstations due, in part, to increasingly sophisticated software), or to staff their companies with ad hoc employees who work only when a project comes in the door, never to sit idly by. As a result, they have become able

exploit unique niches, such as Pittard Sullivan & Fitzgerald, which produces interstitial animated bumpers and wraparounds for the networks.

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**The fiercely competitive marketplace has forced them to cut their fees to the bare bones merely to survive.**

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There is going to be no decisive victory in this battle. Each side will struggle until the next wave of technology sets both sides running back to their respective corners.

**You Liked the Feature, So You Will Love The Sequel!**

The oldest format of New Media is home video, and lately there has been a very disturbing practice in this industry, especially where it relates to animation. Here's the scenario: You see two fighters you like, who put a lot of time into training, who did a good job beating the heck out of each other, and who made a large sum of money in the process. You want to see them do it again, and you make arrangements to do so, allowing them to make an more money, mainly because they had done such a good job the first time. Only *this* time, it is evident that you have been sucked in to seeing to fighters who didn't train, don't fight well, and are frankly, only in it for the money. You go away poorer and unhappy and they go away counting your cash.

In a similar vein, animation studios have acquired the idea that if they sink a lot of money into the first of a series of similar productions, which, to their credit produces a truly fantastic work of art (e.g., Disney's *Aladdin*) then it is perfectly legitimate for the studio to coast on the sequel (*The Return of Jaffar*, et



**Toy Story**  
© Disney Enterprises

hurry as a result of the hard and frequent beatings each have been forced to endure from these pugs with horseshoes in their gloves.

The main problem which these animation companies face is that they have not acquired or established an ownership interest in the product which they produce. The fiercely competitive marketplace has forced them to cut their fees to the bare bones merely to survive.

Some of these companies stood toe-to-toe with the studios, fighting it out project-by-project, fee after fee. They often supported high priced equipment leases for large banks of Silicon Graphics computers and an impressive staff of permanent employees. In the course of gaining experience, some have learned to downsize, either by

opponents, capable of preventing themselves from becoming mauled by the larger and more powerful studios.

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**Look for more "sword and sorcery" titles. Look for fewer compendia of Byzantine wallpaper fabrics.**

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Others, faced with the threat of the studios opening their own computer animation divisions, have seen the writing on the wall, allowed takeovers of their companies, providing themselves with an opportunity to live to fight another day.

A third group are like the most fortunate of boxers, investing wisely, opening gymnasiums to train the young and upcoming. These operations have been able to find and

al.), provided it is only released on home video.

Now excuse me, but isn't there something wrong with this picture? There is no less money spent in

pugilists who fight this dirty *deserve* to be beaten; however, without public action, this is never going to stop.



*Aladdin and the King Of Thieves*

© Disney Enterprises

advertising the sequel than was spent promoting the original. There are the same McDonalds or Burger King promotional tie-ins. The reasonable expectation is thereby created that the new film, which stars the same characters, will be as good as the original. The parent spends the same 25 bucks for the sequel, only to find it is inferior. So inferior in fact, that if it was produced by a bootlegger it could have been taken for such.

Little does the public know that the studio has spent only 25% or less of the original film's budget in producing the sequel. The result is a cheap imitation which actually nets a greater return on investment than the original. Not only does the public suffer, but the studio is actually hurting its own potential and the integrity of its animators in turning out this sort of junk.

To true fans of animation,

### The Brief History of CD-ROM

In 1993, the hope for this new medium's success was bright. Many developers were creating new and unique products ranging from undersea-explorations to the histories of classical music to arcade-style games. In 1994, publishers made an earnest effort to broaden the nature of their products, reaching out to women and adults, building a wider demand. It became mandatory for new computer hardware to include a CD-ROM drive. In 1995, it became clear that there was not

**Studios have acquired the idea that if they sink a lot of money into the first of a series of similar productions, then it is perfectly legitimate for the studio to coast on the sequel, provided it is only released on home video.**

enough retail shelf space to adequately display and market these products, while at the same time, public demand faltered. This faltering was caused in part by difficulty in keeping up with the myriad hardware configurations and system requirements (16-bit sound, high-color, etc.) imposed by programmers.

In 1996, many CD-ROM publishers decided to throw in the towel. Those that did not go out of business, downsized (Philips Media, a pioneer in this technology, just laid off 250 talented employees). The ones that continued in business (Activision, Interplay, et al.) decided to return to the core consumer of CD-ROM users: gamers. Look for more "sword and sorcery" titles. Look for fewer compendia of Byzantine wallpaper fabrics. And those developers who continue to produce highly unusual titles will need to market them directly to the public via direct mail, specialized trade shows, and other unique vertical channels of distribution.

So as the final bell is about to ring for 1996, life goes on, and until a new "champion" appears who is capable of capturing public excitement, it's going to be business as usual throughout the world of New Media for 1997.

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# Visioneering: Interactive Animation at Creative Capers

by Harvey Deneroff

In the last few years, as video game gear and personal computers have become more and more powerful, interactive producers have begun to hire "feature quality" animators and studios to do animation. Thus, Activision used Kroyer Films (*FernGully: The Last Rainforest*) for *Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure*. At the same time, some animation houses were entering the interactive arena in full force, including Creative Capers Entertainment, in Glendale, California.

**It takes a lot of discipline and strength on the part of the animator to say a lot with fewer frames.**

The company was once known for doing animation on such features as *Tom & Jerry: The Movie*, *The Pagemaster* and *Thumbelina*. However, the experience of its founders—the husband and wife team of Terry and Sue Shakespeare, and David Molina—in the interactive arena actually dates back over 10 years, when they worked together for Don Bluth on such pioneering games as *Dragon's Lair* and *Space Ace*. Thus, they were far from complete novices when it decided three years ago to make a major

push into interactive animation, in addition to continuing on other animation and design-related activities.

Last year, they entered into a multi-year agreement with Disney to produce interactive projects together. Their most visible work is seen in the animation for such products as *The Hunchback of Notre Dame Topsy Turvy Games* and the forthcoming *101 Dalmations Animated Storybook*. Disney Interactive also has first dibs on any new projects Creative Capers comes up with.

I recently visited with Sue Shakespeare, Creative Capers' President and Supervising Producer, and Duane Loose, who is given the Disney-style title of "Visioneer." Sue is best known for her management expertise and for her rescue efforts on *Rover Dangerfield* and *The Chipmunk Adventure*, features that had fallen seriously behind schedule. (She also consulted on the completion of Richard Williams's ill-fated masterpiece, *The Thief and the Cobbler* [*Arabian Knight*]; unfortunately, her plan to let Williams finish the film was rejected, but that's another story.)

Duane's background is in industrial design. He was also an award-winning sci-fi/game illustrator, who



Sue Shakespeare, Co-founder Creative Capers Entertainment  
Photo by Walter Mladina

also worked as a designer for Disney's EPCOT Center and on virtual reality installations for Virtual World Entertainment.

## Adjusting to Interactive Animation

Given the studio's experience in doing feature animation, I asked Shakespeare to articulate the differences between straight to interactive animation. "I think there are a lot of differences between the two," she said. "Depending on the plat-



form, we can be working at a variety of frame rates, anywhere from 10 to 18 frames per second. So, we have to adjust our animation style according to the game we're producing, or the platform that it will

the look and feel and the story of the movie with just a tiny percentage of the animation you would have in a film. So, you have to be much more disciplined."

I commented that in most inter-

call tearing. So, titles have restrictions on them.

"For PC and Mac based games, usually the whole screen has to refresh itself [for each movement.] In a Playstation or cartridge games, each character is like a sprite; thus, only that part of the screen where the character is moving, is refreshed, so it can move much faster.

"However, in the *Topsy Turvy Games*, which was developed by a programmer at 7th Level, their engine move things round as sprites, so its moving fast, so you can have a richer experience." But whether or not you get the full benefit of this type of technology still seems to depend in part on the power of your computer.

### Opportunity for Excellence

Duane Loose adds that, "Working within the limitations of the medium is a real opportunity for excellence. I think the goal here has been to provide the kind of quality you normally see in an animated feature, but at the CD-ROM level. I think we've accomplished that, even with the severe limitations of working at 8 or 10 fps, because of the focus is on the art and characterization.

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**The goal here has been to provide the kind of quality you normally see in an animated feature, but at the CD-ROM level.**

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"What we've ended up with," he asserts, "is a superior product that, if you went and put all the inbetweens to make it up to 24 fps, wouldn't change the basic excellence of the animation. Its a challenge, but not everybody does it well. With our group we have taken that [feature animation] quality and imposed it on this genre. Before, it



The evil witch from an upcoming animated story book version of *Hansel and Gretel* by Creative Capers Entertainment.

play on. Disney's Animated Storybooks traditionally are in the 10 fps range. Gaming titles, like the next generation of Playstations, are up at the higher rates, 18 to 24 fps, which is like traditional feature film animation.

She feels that, "It takes a lot of discipline and strength on the part of the animator to say a lot with fewer frames. The animation is much more from pose to pose. It has to be very strong. In features, you move around a lot. You can move slowly, have lots of inbetweens and be very fluid. In games and Animated Storybooks, there's a purpose for every scene and you have to communicate that quickly using half or even a tenth the number of the frames. In an Animated Storybook, the purpose is to deliver

active animation I've seen, only one character seems to move at a time. Shakespeare agreed, noting that, "most of engines, as in the Storybooks, can only refresh the screen at a certain rate. One of the rules is that you can animate no more than about a third of the screen at any one time. That way, you have good response time, the animation can move fluidly and dialogue can continue. If you try to animate more than that, it gets real jerky and drops frames.

"Also," she continues, "if you have a Pentium computer, which is a high performance machine, the CD-ROM is going to play very smoothly. But a lower end machine, such as a 386, can hardly move that graphic material. The movement will get choppy, or do what they

was kind of like the orphan child of animation. If you weren't good enough to be a feature animator, well, you went down to multimedia or something else. That's no longer the case. I think the bar has been raised.

"With the advent of some of the newer technologies, I think feature animation studios are going to be vying with multimedia companies for the same people, because the challenge and quality of the work is going to be the same."

Shakespeare boasts that, "All of our animators are or have been feature animators at Disney, Bluth or Warner Bros. Even for them, when they start doing this, it's a new set of rules they have to learn and they find it really fun. They also find that, as artists, they become better animators, because they're having to

*Plunk and Boom*. They adjusted the style of animation from very slow, fluid animation to punctuated movement that relied on very strong poses."

Loose adds that, "Our goal is to always experiment, like Kimball did, to keep ourselves challenged, so we always maintain the bar at a higher level."

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**We need to know what kind of entertainment properties will happen and what kind of animation is going to be needed.**

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### New Technologies

Shakespeare and Loose both look forward to using such new technologies as DVD which will allow them to do more complex animation. "The reason," she states, "is

that we've already set ourselves up with a process that we feel will take advantage of any new technology that comes along; I think we understand the limitations and the gifts that it will give us, so we can do things that we're already chomping at the bit to do once the technology is here. That's why we have a development group (we call it visioneering) which

gets our minds out into the future. We not only look at new technology, but what's happening in our society. We know that, when these new technologies come out, that we have the vision to be able to take advantage of them: first by understanding them and having a process that takes advantage of them.

"It's like working out what the

Internet will be like a year or two out, when cable modems will be in place. It'll be a totally different. We need to know what kind of entertainment properties will happen and what kind of animation is going to be needed."

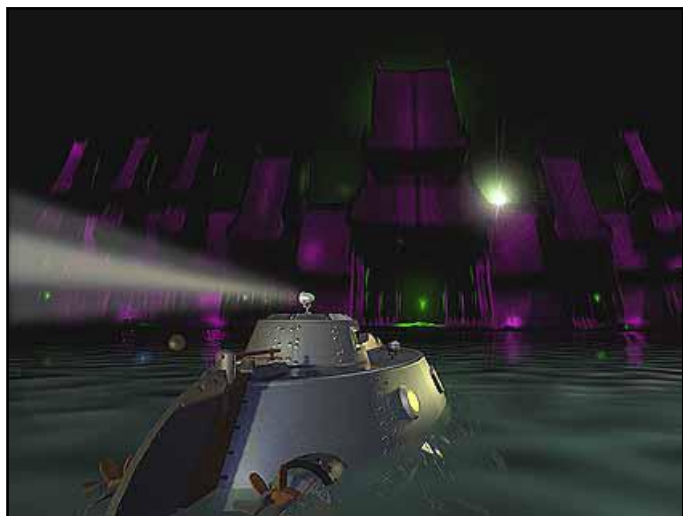
Loose adds that, "We're excited about the new technologies. If this was Medieval England, we'd be the wizards, because we're the ones that are involved in the alchemy."

"For some," he continues, "all the new technology raises more questions than it answers. Where we look at is that it's raising opportunities for us to just do more of what we really love to do."

"The strength of the tool is important," Shakespeare points out, "but that's not the answer. The answer is the artist behind the tool. That creative brain married with a superlative set of tools can create phenomenal things. We are still PC and Mac based. We have not found the desire to invest heavily in the SGI area, because we feel with a number of PC and Mac tools we can create equally great art."

Or, as Loose put it, "We are artists first. We don't want people who are just technologists. We want people that have the passion for design and art that will basically enable the tool to go much further than the a technologist will be able to take it. So, when we look at emerging technologies, we look at as another paint brush or pencil; as another way to express an artistic vision."

*Harvey Deneroff, in addition to his duties as Editor of Animation World Magazine, edits and publishes The Animation Report, an industry newsletter.*



Submarine approaching the Necromancer's palace from an upcoming adventure game by Creative Capers Entertainment.

tell that message, or do that action in limited frames, and just put in the drawings that count."

She puts the challenge posed by interactive animation today by comparing it with those posed by the limited animation styles popularized by UPA and then taken up by Disney in the 1950s, when "Ward Kimball started doing some experimental films like *Toot, Whistle,*



# LETTUCE ENTERTAIN YOU: A VISIT TO SIERRA ON-LINE

by Judith Shane

A leader in the interactive entertainment industry, Sierra On-Line, located in the Seattle suburb of Bellevue, has approximately 100 games in development at any time, and receives at least that many unsolicited game ideas per month.

I present myself at reception at the appointed time. I'm asked to sign in (name, affiliation, time in). Reception phones Al Lowe. "Send her down," he says. I am told to take the elevator to the second floor. "To your right, there is an unmarked door. Knock. Someone will let you in." What? No weapons search. Bemused but game, I proceed as directed. Two AIs are waiting for me as I emerge from the elevator: Al Lowe the designer and animator Al Eufrasio. We go into Al Lowe's office.

"What is it I'm not supposed to steal." A strange expression flits across Lowe's face. "Didn't you sign a non-disclosure agreement?" Is he kidding? I can't be sure. "You see we created a language specifically for writing the games," he explains.

What they are protecting, he tells me is not the new Leisure Suit Larry game—*Love For Sail*—but the proprietary language for writing games and the animation and other programs they use. Proprietary super software. Including ways to

handle a loop of cels, bounce a character from right to left, attach text to specific actions, and retrieve recorded sound from a 2 hour session in 10 minutes.

This translates into production efficiency. And all else being equal, if you can make them quicker, your cost is less. For example, the French language version can be completed about three days after recording. Of course, all else never is equal, but Larry's production values are extremely high, so maybe the savings translate into a better product: digitized music, deft animation and seamless software give a welcome ease of play—an aesthetic experience for the player.

"I'll be going to Europe soon to oversee the French and

German versions of *Love For Sail*," Lowe continues. We're distributed by Coktel, the largest education and game publisher in Europe." The French and German versions feature those languages in audio. The Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian versions have foreign language text only."

## Jolly Al

I ask why Sierra doesn't just license their proprietary language and software, i.e., sell it. Lowe says that he has suggested it. But, then

you have to worry about people paying for it. Paranoia notwithstanding, Al Lowe looks and sounds just like you want a creator of humorous games to look. Jolly. (After all, would you trust a chef who wasn't fat?)

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**We decided against using live actors, for fear the live ones would both increase the sleaze and reduce the humor.**

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Jolly Al asks whether I'd like a copy of "An Interview with Lowe, Creator of Leisure Suit Larry and Designer of Love for Sail," written by Al Lowe?

Sure, why not. Save me the trouble of writing this article. "No. No. In case you need additional information," he chuckles.

(You've got to admire a guy who not only writes his own games, but the fact sheets and interviews to go with them as well. Mr. Chutzpah. Here's a question and answer from Al's interview with Al. )

Q. Is it true you are the world's oldest living computer game designer?

A. (Laughs) Of course. At Least, that's what I've claimed for years. To date, no one has ever challenged me. On the other hand, it's scarcely a title to fight over, is it?

"I started programming in 1978 and within a few years was creating games for Sierra. My first full-blown animated 3D graphic adventure game for



*Leisure Suit Larry*  
© Sierra-On-Line

Sierra was *The Black Cauldron*, in 1984. In '87, the Leisure Suit Larry series began."

"So, how do you design a game anyway," I toss out.

"With a little help from my friends," Lowe throws back. "Actually with a lot of help. Team meetings are key. Anything that I threw out that got a laugh we kept. If it didn't we cut it. The byword is, 'You don't cut funny.' We decided against using live actors, for fear the live ones would both increase the sleaze and reduce the humor." An easy choice.

### 3D or 2D, That is the Question

"Now that you've finished Leisure Suit Larry #7, what's next?"

"That's a good question. This is the first time Larry has been animated by hand. The big animation question is 3D or 2D. What'll it be? This Larry release is a test case, to see whether it can withstand the competition for 3D rendered products. A fork in the road for me. My focus is on humor, poking fun at society's mores, pretensions, etc. Properly done, Larry calls for 2D animation. Unfortunately, you generally see games animated in 3D doing better than those in 2D."

"It's hard to give 3D characters character," chimes in Al Eufrazio. "You're limited to how much information you can put into the computer, and this translates [for example] into how far you can bend a knee."

*Love For Sail* has more than 2D in its favor. The sound is excellent. There is an original score recorded by breathing musicians, as well as popular songs from the 70s. A player can insert both his voice and photograph into the game. And a scratch and sniff card with smells both pleasing and offensive is

included in the package.

And of course there is the play. *Love For Sail* follows one of the most pleasing of game plans: story driven and laced with activities in a

otherwise.

### The Adult in Adult Entertainment

If one company and prod-



*Leisure Suit Larry*  
© Sierra-On-Line

nonlinear playing structure. Interest is added to the usual point and click interface with commands you type in and pull-down menus à la Windows 95. Players with a scanner and WAV recorder can insert their face and dialogue on screen.

*Love For Sail* is described by Sierra as an adventure game with puzzles. OK. But its not the adventure or the puzzles which are the reason for playing the game. Its the humor. Pun-filled dialogue, off (but not too off) color bad jokes, and pie in the face slapstick. Bob Hope in the back room. Its more humor packaged as an adventure game with puzzles.

**It's hard to give 3D characters character. You're limited to how much information you can put into the computer.**

The game is simple-minded but not simple. And its fun. Verbal interactions with characters are conducted by preselected phrases and the odd keyword typed in. Text input is not only important, but necessary to complete the game. Certain puzzles cannot be solved

uct might serve as a touchstone for the evolution of the interactive entertainment industry, it is Sierra On-Line and its Leisure Suit Larry series. First in the category of "adult only" software in 1987, Leisure Suit Larry is renown for the California bill of the same name which, had it passed, would have prohibited adult-themed computer games. The bill died in committee and Larry has happily bumbled and "gauched" all the way to the current title.

When the Leisure Suit Larry series is described as adult entertainment, this is not a neutral description of pornography. More like lawyer speak for: you-can't-sue-us-we-told-you-its-not-for-12-year-olds. I wonder who the adult is in "adult entertainment."

Al Lowe says that the kind of adults they are designing for are those who enjoy brain teasers and logic puzzles. When asked the age of the intended player, he said, "Well, I don't have any problems with a 17 year old playing the game. On the other hand, I don't think its appropriate for my 13 year old daughter."

At this point, Lowe turns me



over to the animators and my tour of the back rooms at Sierra continues in the office of Jason Zayas, head animator. Jason, Al Eufrazio, and William O'Brien comprise the in-house animation team and are all graduates of the Joe Kubert School of Cartoon and Graphic Art. Self-named for the founder, the three year school opened in 1976, is primarily for cartoonists, and teaches a Warner Bros. (squash and stretch) technique of animation.

"Say what? The animation was done in Croatia? Whose idea was that?" I ask.

"Well, it wasn't ours," Jason says. "We work with two animation studios: L.A. West in Eugene, Oregon and Animotion in Syracuse, New York. "We drew all the key frames and they helped with the inbetweening, coloring and computer transference.

"Each studio received about one-half the work.

"And," he continued, "L.A. West farmed out some of their work to a studio in Croatia."

"That could provide interesting difficulties, unless your artists were American culture junkies. Humor is cultural specific more often than not. What problems did you have?"

"Overseas animators don't always get the jokes," Jason allowed. "For example, when *Leisure Suit Larry* did a Homer Simpson reaction, the animators saw a sneeze. This was impossible to explain."

"How did you handle these shall we call them failures to communicate?"

"One of three ways: We'd send it back, if there was time, redo it ourselves if there wasn't, or simply finagle the cels to make it work."

### Part Engineers, Part Artists

Jason, Al and Bill finagle well.

Part engineers, part artists and general masterminds, they lay out storyboards from the script if they have time. They don't always have the time and substitute key frames in lieu of storyboards. They scan in the

moving at the same time."

"What is the advantage?" I ask. Al explains that when you break up a cel, it increases your chances that the sequence will move smoothly on slower computers.



*Leisure Suit Larry*  
© Sierra-On-Line

hand drawing and use software to enhance the colors. The backgrounds are scanned and computer colored. The animators work hand-in-hand with programmers. "The programmers are our cameramen," Jason said. "And we have to give them the blueprints."

The animators are also creative cheats. Bounded by the constraints of time on the one hand and the limitations of technology (eight frames per second) on the other, the animators tap dance to all sorts of tunes to make the movement more fluid.

"One way we make limited animation look full," Jason revealed, "is by pasting parts of bodies on the background to free up sufficient memory to better animate the rest. We also break up the cels so that not all parts of the characters are

"Do you change the animation for foreign language releases?"

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**Bounded by the constraints of time on the one hand and the limitations of technology on the other, the animators tap dance to all sorts of tunes to make the movement more fluid.**

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They answer no and to my surprise add that they don't always hear the dialogue before they animate the English version. Recording dialogue for the game generally starts in the middle of production. The animators work from the script or sometimes just the mood of a scene. The mouth and eye movements are drawn separate from the bodies. And an audio program (another piece of proprietary soft-

ware) syncs the mouth positions to the dialogue.

Al comments that, "We use eight mouth movements in generic mouth positions and expressions,



**Leisure Suit Larry**  
© Sierra-On-Line

happy or sad eyebrows and so on. Basically, what we are doing is Japanese style animation: generic talkers. Sometimes it matches up to the audio, sometimes it doesn't. You have to lay out the animation, guess how its going to act out, and then cleanup afterwards. Change the tone by selecting a different mouth

position, for example. Its easy."

But is it an easy sell? How the Larry series evolves 2D, 3D, or at all, depends not only on how well the current title sells, but likely on how well all the current Sierra titles sell. CUC International recently acquired Sierra the largest in-house developer of entertainment and education software in the US—emphasis on entertainment. At the same time CUC also purchased Davidson & Associates, a busy publisher of education and entertainment software—emphasis on education.

What does this mean? Well, for one thing, the labels may lose their integrity. *Stay Tooned*, an interactive cartoon game alternative to Saturday morning in front of the tube is being released under the Sierra label. The game was created by Funnybone, which was acquired by Davidson & Associates not too long ago.

CUC is a monster retail and membership services megacompa-

ny. Whether the Internet succeeds primarily as an avenue of commerce or entertainment, CUC is covering its bets. Walter A. Forbes, chairman and CEO states that, "Davidson' and Sierra On-Line's development expertise will enable us to build one of the most compelling sites in the interactive world . . . . We believe we will create one of the most dynamic and all-encompassing consumer-services sites on the Internet." Not too all encompassing, please, Mr. Forbes. Interactive games on the Internet may be a major piece of the future, but not the whole future. Not everyone wants to see Larry promoting Shoppers Advantage.

*Judith Shane is a Seattle-based freelance writer and editor. Her email address is fox2trot@earthlink.net.*

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# Street Fighter

## From Video Game to Anime

by Brian Camp

Although *Street Fighter* is not the only video game to be adapted for film and television, it alone has seen several versions, both American and Japanese, and thus offers a case study of how a game can be transformed into different styles of animated entertainment. With the right creators at the helm, it can even take on a compelling narrative life of its own, boasting enough action, drama and artistry to attract significant crossover audiences.

The *Street Fighter* game, a product of Capcom, a Japanese-owned video game company, first appeared in 1987; it featured just two playable characters, Ken and Ryu, young martial artists who faced a variety of opponents, all armed with different martial arts styles and appropriately deadly moves. The game achieved worldwide popularity in 1991 in a revised form entitled *Street Fighter II*; over the next 2 years, it underwent 3 revisions until it had established its unique multiracial cast of 16 playable characters, ranging from the 4 attractive young martial artists—the American male Ken, the Japanese male Ryu, the Chinese female Chun Li and the British female Cammy White—to the brute strongmen, Russian wrestler

Zangief, Japanese sumo wrestler E. Honda, Thai kickboxer Sagat, black American boxer Balrog and South American wild man Blanka.

Each of the characters has a

Friedman, licensing executive at Capcom, “like a fable, orally told and passed down” from fan to fan.

The popularity of *Street Fighter II* enabled Capcom to assign film rights to the game to producers in both the US and Japan, with the intention of tailoring different versions for its two most responsive markets. In 1994, it was adapted into two different theatrical films, one a live-action Hollywood film called *Street Fighter*, for the American and international markets, and the other a Japanese animated film called *Street Fighter II* for Japan and selected international markets. In 1995, both films were adapted into animated TV series, again, one for the US and one for Japan. The US series, also titled *Street Fighter*, premiered on the USA cable network with 13 episodes in the fall of '95, and 13 new ones in the fall of '96.

The Japanese series, *Street Fighter II V* (the V stands for Victory), lasted 29 episodes. All film and TV versions carry the name of Kenzo Tsujimoto, the president of Capcom, as producer. All of the characters from *Street Fighter II* appear in one form or another in each of the different versions.

The American film *Street Fighter* and the first season of the American TV series stress standard action movie combat rather than martial



*Street Fighter II, The TV Series.*  
© Manga Entertainment

backstory conveyed partly through promotional material, such as trading cards and articles in gaming magazines, and partly through the game itself, in which key information is revealed to winners. Since no *Street Fighter* bible exists, the stories are, in the words of Don

**The stories are like a fable,  
orally told and passed down  
from fan to fan.**

arts, with story lines involving high-tech terrorism and military intervention, while showcasing ensemble casts. The Japanese versions, however, focus on a handful of characters and build relationships among them, creating story lines which incorporate character development and emotional conflict, while not skimping on the martial arts styles which made the game so popular.

### The American Movie

*Street Fighter*, the live action movie distributed by Universal Pictures, is worth covering briefly because of its influence on the subsequent American animated series.



*Street Fighter II, the TV Series.*  
© Manga Entertainment

Its chief protagonist is Colonel Guile, an American military man in the game but positioned here as the commander of Allied Nations peace-keeping forces (a stand-in for the UN) stationed in the fictional Southeast Asian country of Shadaloo. Guile is played by Belgian-born (and accented) martial arts star Jean-Claude Van Damme, who was reportedly the top choice for the role among adolescent players of the game polled by the producers. The plot involves the efforts of Colonel Guile and his team to rescue international relief workers held by terrorist leader General Bison,

who seeks to gain control of Shadaloo. The action culminates in a raid on Bison's hidden underground base and consists of by-the-book gun battles, explosions and fist fights, with little in the way of real martial arts. Even Van Damme's final duel with Bison (played by the ailing, nonmartial artist Raul Julia only months before his death), relies heavily on fanciful stunts and the work of doubles rather than actual hand-to-hand fighting.

The film makes prominent use of all the video game characters, who are played by an impressive multiracial international cast, starting with its Belgian star and including Puerto Rican American Raul Julia; Australian pop singer Kylie Minogue (as Cammy White); Chinese American actress Ming-Na Wen (as Chun Li); Caribbean American actor Grand L. Bush (as Balrog); Indian star Roshan Seth (as Dhalsim); and American Indian actor Wes Studi (as Sagat). Each one of the characters is given their moment in the spotlight and are about evenly divided among Guile and Bison. None, however, is given a

story line or character problem significant enough to give the film a narrative focus. The movie turned out to be a disappointment at the box office and no sequels are planned.

### The American TV Series

*Street Fighter*, the animated TV series shown in the United States on the USA Network as a Saturday morning cartoon show, and thus aimed at children, posits "Street Fighter" as a code name for a secret American-based organization devoted to fighting international crime and terrorism. Most of the video

game characters are enlisted on the side of this organization, whose motto is "Discipline, Justice, Commitment." Some of the story lines derive from the live action movie, while others draw on the video game lore. The chief protagonist is Colonel Guile, now a covert commando in the guise of a freelance street fighter and sporting his trademark video game look of spiked blond crew cut, army tank top and camouflage pants. The chief antagonist is, again, Bison, leader of the terrorist organization Shadaloo. In each self-contained episode, Guile chooses from among a pool of sidekicks, depending on the demands of the story, frequently teaming up with Chun Li, the mutant Blanka, the American Indian T-Hawk, or British agent Cammy White. Ken Masters and Ryu turn up occasionally as youthful goof-offs and money-hustlers (as they were depicted in the movie) who need Guile's stern hand to divert their energy to heroic rather than selfish purposes.

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**The choice of Guile as protagonist reflects the traditional attraction to seasoned, battle-hardened authority figures in the tradition of John Wayne but with a touch of the maverick, à la Rambo.**

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As seen in the first season, which was produced by Graz Entertainment, the action is executed in the standard limited-animation style of American children's TV—marked by bright colors, bold lines, rounded shapes for the characters, simple backgrounds, static compositions and an abundance of dialogue. Martial arts are on display, but only in short, perfunctory bursts employing some of the characters' moves from the game. The moves most



often seen, because they are the simplest to animate, are the blasts of energy summoned at will, such as Guile's "sonic boom," a ball of energy used to stun opponents.

The choice of Guile as protagonist reflects American action genres' traditional attraction to seasoned, battle-hardened authority figures in the tradition of John Wayne but with a touch of the maverick, à la Rambo. The Japanese versions, however, follow the traditional use in anime of youthful heroes who undergo training and rites of passage, with older mentor figures acting as teachers and guides but never dominating the action.

### The Japanese Movie

The Japanese animated theatrical movie, *Street Fighter II*, focuses on young Japanese martial artist Ryu, who undertakes a personal journey in search of knowledge, wisdom and the improvement of his fighting skills. He becomes the focus of a struggle between criminal mastermind Bison, who has brainwashed Ryu's American blood brother Ken Masters, and Interpol agent Chun Li and her American military liaison Captain Guile. These five become the film's main characters, while the other game characters make cameo appearances, incorporated into the action at key points in a plot that follows Bison's attempts to locate and abduct the world's top street fighters and brainwash them into working for him.

There's a clear narrative progression and a sense of character development as Ryu makes his way across South Asia, looking to hone his skills by fighting local champions and achieve some sort of spiritual understanding of the powerful inner energy he possesses. The battles are often modeled after those

in the video game and boast the kind of detailed movement and choreography absent from most similar animated fare (even in Japan). For instance, a back alley street match witnessed by Ryu in India pits Indian "rubber man" and yoga master Dhalsim against Japanese sumo wrestler E. Honda in a fight that employs several of the characters' moves from the video game; it is animated with spectacle



*Street Fighter II*, The TV Series.  
© Manga Entertainment

and realism, but given a much larger canvas and greater intensity due to the animators' ability to get closer to the action.

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**The overall emotional intensity of the series allows for moments of violence that would never be tolerated in an American show.**

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*Street Fighter II* was directed by veteran director, Gisaburo Sugii (*The Tale of Genji*, *Night on the Galactic Railroad*), and features the lush visual style often noted in Japanese animated features. The character design is generally quite realistic, unusually so for Japanese anima-

tion. It is deliberately paced, with quiet stretches between the action scenes, as mood and setting are carefully established to allow the viewer to keep track of the comings and goings of the various characters.

### The Japanese TV Series

*Street Fighter II V*, the Japanese TV series, was also directed by Sugii and adopts the darker, more intense tone of the animated movie. Depicting events which are supposed to predate those in the feature, the series is marked by a continuing story line, which contains a number of plot threads that string out over several episodes each; they all follow an arc beginning with the journey of young martial artists Ryu and Ken Masters to seek out other "street fighters" in a far-flung effort to improve their skills.

Ryu and Ken are both 17-years-old in this story and are accompanied through much of the proceedings by Chinese martial artist Chun Li, the 15-year-old daughter of Royal Hong Kong Police Inspector Dohrai. The eventful story line begins with the reunion of Ken and Ryu in San Francisco years after their childhood training together at a martial arts *dojo* (school) in Japan. Their defeat in a barroom brawl at the hands of Guile, here a US Air Force sergeant, humiliates the cocky youths and leads them to realize the need to travel and perfect their skills.

Their adventures take them to a variety of picturesque settings beginning with Hong Kong, where they meet Chun Li and kung fu movie star Fei Long, and Thailand, where Ryu learns the art of Muay Thai from kickboxer Sagat (who's a villain in all the other versions). The boys continue on to India where they study

under the mystic Dhalsim who teaches them to unleash the energy wave known as "hadow-ko," in which the user draws power from natural forces around him. The final third of the series finds Ken and Guile at war with the evil terrorist leader Lord Vega (a renamed Bison) who controls both Ryu and Chun Li with implanted cyber chips.

There is an abundance of martial arts combat and attention to different styles. The fights carry significant dramatic weight and are staged with great care and accurate stances and given plenty of screen time. Many

moves from the game appear in the series, including the celebrated "Hado-Ryu-Ken," which is deployed by Ken in his climactic battle with the cyber-controlled Ryu. In each case, the moves have both narrative importance and emotional value. Because of the budgetary limits of television, the battles lack the detailed presentation of the animated feature, although the short cuts employed, including frequent close-ups and a masterful use of vocal and sound effects and music, demonstrate imagination and innovative design.

The overall emotional intensity of the series allows for moments of violence that would never be tolerated in an American show. The more serious duels are particularly brutal and leave the participants, especially the young heroes, bloodied and bruised. The combat here is neither easy nor pretty. Like many Japanese animated TV programs,

the program is aimed at adolescent and older viewers.

The lessons of the Japanese approach to *Street Fighter* have not been lost on the producers of the American series. The second season of *Street Fighter*, which premiered



*Street Fighter II, The TV Series.*  
© Manga Entertainment

on September 21, 1996, offers a striking contrast with the first season. Both the character and graphic design are much more detailed, in the Japanese manner, and much more attractively planned out. Produced by InVision Entertainment, a new company formed by Michael Hack, who had been a producer at Graz, and Daniel S. Kletzky, whose ELA acts as Capcom's licensing agency, the new shows offers more dramatic stories and greater fidelity to the video game. As part of the tie-in with the game, new episodes will incorporate characters from the new *Street Fighter Alpha 2* video game. The first to emerge is Rose, a female mystic and purveyor of "soul power," who enlists Ken and Blanka to help her take on Bison in *The Flame and the Rose*.

One new episode is worth singling out for its pronounced similarity in style and theme to *Street Fighter II V. The World's Greatest*

*Warrior* features Ken and Ryu coming to the aid of their Japanese master, Gouken, after he's attacked by his evil brother Akuma and robbed of his *qi*, his inner life force, in a plot twist taken directly from the video game. This is the first time in the US series that Ken and Ryu are allowed to stand on their own and the experience proves a grueling test for them. The episode's Japanese setting, the increased emphasis on martial arts, and the need for maturity on the part of the two young protagonists all reflect the welcome influence of the Japanese show.

With this year's best-selling US home video release by Sony Music Video of the Japanese feature version, dubbed in English and marketed as *Street Fighter II: The Animated Movie*; the marked improvement of the American TV series; and the impending video release in the US of *Street Fighter II V* by Manga Entertainment, American fans of either *Street Fighter* and/or quality action animation have much to celebrate.

*Brian Camp is Program Manager at CUNY-TV, the City University of New York cable TV station. He has written about Japanese animation for Outre Magazine and The Motion Picture Guide and has also written for Film Comment, Film Library Quarterly, Sightlines and the New York Daily News.*



# Interactive Trendlines

compiled by Frankie Kowalski

**G**iven the rapid rate of change in the interactive animation industry, we thought it would be interesting to check in with some of the key figures to see what they feel the future has in store.

**John Gentile, President, Abrams/Gentile Entertainment, New York City:**

With the future megabyte platform just around the corner, true interactive entertainment will finally occur with the introduction of DVD and multilevel DVD (supporting up to a terrabyte of data on one mini-CD). But, what will truly drive interactive media will be ultimately one thing—content.

Content in the form of good stories and original characters is king and will always be king. The focus in creating such content will be to develop and create multi-layered storylines and characters to take advantage of the interactive process and maximize the multiple decision trees, the interactive viewer must choose to complete the story or adventure.

AGE will continue its pursuit of state of the art animation, both in cel and digital form, along with the creator of animation (animation and live action) and live action with computer entertainment programs that push the visual envelope of TV viewing, while at the same time, creating content that is able to be totally vertically integrated from anima-

tion to interactive publishing and all forms of multimedia byproducts."

**Blaine Cone, Vice President Research and Design, Nicholas Frank Company, Atlanta:**

The emergence of DVD will be a god-send for the "content intensive" segment of the industry. DVD is a medium capable of providing enough disk space for extensive animation, audio, etc. This means that animation and audio quality won't be as limited by space constraints anymore. It's a beautiful thing . . .



**Mega Math Blaster**  
© Davidson & Associates

**Gail Williams, Director, Multimedia, Corel Corporation, Ottawa:**

Corel is very excited about the future of the multimedia industry. Industry trends show that educational products are expected to boom starting as early as 1997 and will eventually match game revenue. Corel hopes to be a dominant force in both areas.

In addition, Corel has entered

the high-end multimedia market with Corel Click and Create a multimedia authoring tool, which will soon be bundled with Corel Lumiere.

The recent progression in hardware development in such areas as increased processing power, larger mass storage devices, and plentiful RAM on computer systems being purchased in the consumer market, coupled with readily available video capture technology, has made the market ripe for applications that can quickly and easily turn raw video footage into a highly polished production. Corel Lumiere is just such a product.

Computer animation has never been more exciting and Corel hopes to continue to provide excitement to its users with leading edge graphics and animation in its series of multimedia products.

**Bing Gordon, Co-founder & Executive Vice President of Marketing, Electronic Arts, San Mateo, California:**

Electronic Arts was founded in 1982 to make entertainment software as important as film and recorded music. We're about half way there, in my opinion. One of the major changes has been the growing importance of art and animation. In 1982, computer games cost \$50,000 to build, and had \$5,000 worth of art. Today, CD-ROM games cost \$1-2 Million to build, with \$500,000 to \$1 Million in art. The most important trend in entertainment software is not technology, but the increased importance of world class creative

artists. Here's why:

- Great art and audio pump up the *immersiveness* of our medium. Forget virtual reality headsets; people are delivering VR on high-res monitors through motion captured 3D characters, 3D worlds and vehicles, and great cel animation.
- World class animation dramatically increases the *sensuality* of our software. Traditionally trained animators are teaching us to turn hundred-polygon blockheads and flying boxcars into avatars and F-15s.
- World class artists are *reinventing* entertainment software. World class creative artists, after a 3-5 year apprenticeship in software, are starting to turn video games for boys into interactive entertainment for everyone. They're making the products that keep me interested. And making the jump to TV, film and book successes.

At EA, we have more than 150 animators and 3-D artists making 40 games each year, in Northern California, Vancouver BC, Austin Texas, London and Tokyo.

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**Ian Verchere, Producer, Radical Entertainment, Vancouver, British Columbia:** With the increasing accessibility of powerful 3D processors, whether in game consoles made by Sony and Nintendo or as add-on boards for PCs, immersive interactive 3D experiences are becoming widely available to the mass market. What had previously existed only in the ethereal economic realm of the military and aerospace industries can now be purchased at software and electronics retailers for under \$200.

High-resolution computer animations associated with the cinema have the luxury of minutes or hours

of rendering time. Interactive experiences, particularly action-based video and computer gaming demand rendering speeds measured in a sixtieth of a second.

The animation of characters in this challenging environment requires unique skills. Artists with a solid foundation in the traditional language of 2D animation and a willingness to explore new technology will be much in demand.

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**Rich Cook, Creative Director, Davidson & Associates, Torrance, California:** In 1997, we anticipate an even greater use of composited graphics, i.e. 2D character animation with 3D modeled backgrounds, objects and interface elements. At Davidson, we are combining elements from both 2D and 3D worlds and inventing new ways for them to work together.

The next step in this direction will be the use of 3D character animation, both in the 3D world and combined with live-action 2D backgrounds, or graphic elements. Character animation at Davidson is going even a step further, with the use of some very new technology in the performance animation field. I expect there will be an explosion of interest in this technology in the coming year.

The use of 3D character models with motion data supplied by a live actor will shorten production times and emphasize human reactions and emotions. This exciting art form will continue traditional theatrical techniques, puppeteering, 3D character modeling and cartooning in a single animated performance. We are also looking into ways for this all to happen in real time, bringing us closer to something we might call cybermation.



**Dennis Defensor, President and CEO, TerraGlyph Interactive Studios**

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**Dennis Defensor, President and CEO, TerraGlyph Interactive Studios, Schaumburg, Illinois:** The bar has been raised, and expectations are changing. Pixellated graphics or low quality animation will no longer appeal to the mainstream consumer market. The animation for an interactive entertainment product must be film-feature quality, otherwise it will risk being stigmatized as an inferior product. In the near future, we will see the seamless integration of 2D and 3D animation to capture the smooth motion of 2D motion and the depth of 3D. Due to new hardware developments as the PC moves from the home office to the living room, products must be developed that will be compelling from 1-1/2 feet to 10 feet away from the monitor.

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**Steve Halpern, Publishing Operations/Development, GTE Interactive, Carlsbad, California:** Here at GTE Entertainment we continually strive to push the envelope with regard to engineering, graphics and design to directly support realism and game play. We see the momentous changes in technical advancements quickly reaching a



critical mass which will ultimately enable us to create environments that reflect reality and thereby enable us to focus our energy on great game experiences.

Faster processors and accelerator boards will enable us to create a sense of realism that will elicit the level of emotional response that can be equated to real life action based experiences. Coupled with SGI graphics and highly tuned AI and 3D engines we can provide the audience with real time PC based interactive experiences that totally immerse the consumer.

Concurrently we see advancement on the horizon focusing on bandwidth and latency issues that ultimately will enable the Internet to host forums of multi-player gaming experiences, demonstrating the realism described above. We at GTE Entertainment plan to participate in the forefront of those developments. However, it is our firm belief that it is the game play that must be our primary focus and that it is the consumer that will ultimately decide the success or failure of our creations.

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**Steve Crane, Vice President Technology, Activision Studios, Los Angeles:** Today's animation technology is already fairly sophisticated. However, the area in which animation technology for game development will continue to change will be in the types of computers used and the technology features that will convey a greater sense of character realism.

The ultimate goal for game developers is to have the ability to create virtual characters with realis-

tic movement and personalities that allow players complete character control. This is being achieved through the combination of having animators develop on the target machine for the user end product and creating new animation tools that will convey the subtleties of human realism

Currently, game developers in particular are moving away from Silicon Graphics Workstations to PC computers. One of the reasons for this shift is that PCs are more cost effective and more financially accessible. They are also familiar to a greater number of animators. Additionally, PCs offer greater com-



**Steve Crane, Vice President Technology, Activision Studios**

patibility for game developers because it is the target machine for the end product.

In the area of character animation, current technology is pushing the envelope in allowing animators to create characters with real personalities while giving players complete character control. However, there are still a few computer constructs preventing character motion from seeming human. To overcome these obstacles, game developers are building their own interactive animation tables and additional tools.

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**Nick Iuppa, Vice President of Design, Paramount Digital Media, Mountain View, California:** My good friend Chuck Jones recently reminded me that Webster's definition of animation is "to breathe life into something." And that is what I see animation doing for the Internet, adding life to locations and

pages that formerly were static.

Of course there are tools required to make this happen, there are questions of download time. But the *pull* of user demand may bring those tools into our hands more quickly than we ever thought possible.

In the meantime, the more we can add motion to our sites, the more we can bring them to life. The is almost a requirement for those of us who are attempting to create entertainment sites. Without motion and quality sound, the Internet can never fully become a popular entertainment medium. Nor can it really begin to explore that most important and elusive characteristic, *interactivity*.

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**Sue Rosenthal, Manager Of Interactive Media, Scholastic Productions, New York City:** I'm not typical in my vision of what's going to happen with CD-ROMs. The hype these days seems to be with the Internet and people think that they are going to be no more. But I think all you have to do is look at the installed base of computers with CD-ROM players in homes and schools to know that they are not going to go away overnight. Especially CDs for kids. They are the ones who are going to drive demand in the next decade. All one has to do is look at increasing sales of a program like the magic school bus or any of the other top kids titles to figure that out.

Up until very recently, animation was *the* viable option for CD-ROMs. It certainly looks like we'll have technologies that will not only be capable of running animation, but of running truly viable video and merging the two. In some respect, you're going to have computer graphics that are merging with video. A good example of that is

*Escape From Horrorland*, the *Goosebumps* CD-ROM we did with DreamWorks.

What you've seen in the past is that the animation [in CD-ROMs] has been limited by what the users' computer can run. You're not getting as many frames as you are in television animation. The more powerful computers get and the better compression technology gets, then you'll be getting animation that's close to, or even better than television.

However, what's going to make animation and interactive entertainment products successful is starting out with a good story, a strong license and great characters. I don't care how good your technology is, if you don't have that to begin with, you're not going to have a good product.



**R. Scott Russo, Vice President, Interactive & Executive Producer, Film Roman**

**Scott Russo, Vice President, Interactive & Executive Producer, Film Roman, North Hollywood:** The industry has taken a good hit, with a lot of publishers going out of business. We've actu-

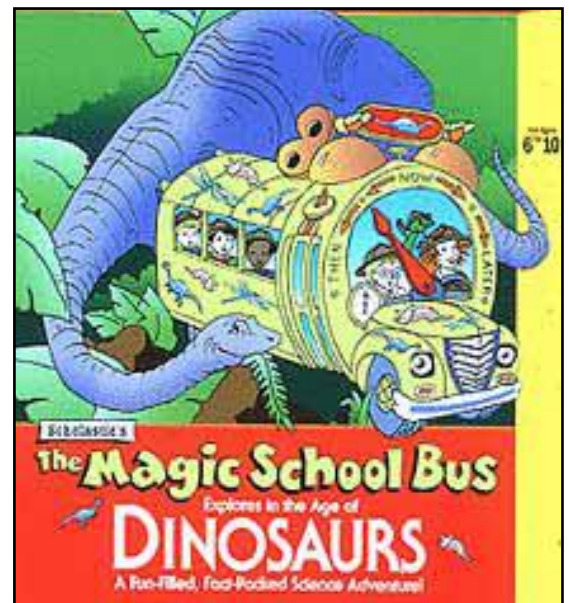
ally had a significant growth in the industry, but we've also had an exponential growth of titles coming into the marketplace. So, no one is really doing the numbers they've done previously.

Because of that, people are going towards games that were successful in the past—the *Marios*, the *King's Quests* and the *Wing Commanders*. Christmas 97 is going to be like a sequel summer, at least for the titles that are going to do well. There will be other titles out there, but I don't think they're going to have anywhere near the hit potential that some of the sequels will next year.

There's a lot of consumer weariness to where the market is really going. Once the platform wars settle down a bit (whether Nintendo 64 or Sony Playstation is going to win), or if CD-ROMs are going to be around, or if everything is going to go on-line. Thus, no one is buying a lot of product now. That's going to change, too, but it's going to take 18 months.

Going on-line eliminates a lot of problems. A lot of people want multiplayer games, which certainly is a new trend. So, as bandwidth issues and latency problems go away, you're going to see very high quality content there.

As to animation, the current trend is to high-end 3D graphics. Two-D cel animation certainly has its place in the linear formats, but it's skewing very young in the interactive market. It's great for edutainment or educational titles, or for the stuff companies like Disney and Brøderbund do. But the games that are the big hits—*7th Guest*, *Commander and Conquer*, *Warcraft*—they use a lot of 3D graphics.



**The Magic School Bus**  
© Scholastic

**Mark Schlichting, Vice President of Research & Design/Creative Director, Living Books, San Francisco:** Some of the changes I see in animation have to do with it being streamed over the Internet. In the early days of CD-ROM, we had to design animation for the narrow bandwidth available with less powerful machines and slow CD drives. Basically single pixel outlines with simple color fills. Now on CD-ROM, we are using anti-aliased pencil and ink lines with millions of colors to paint with. But until the bandwidth of the Internet gets better, the best of the new streaming technologies still push us back to the older data rates, where we will have to use more limited animation and rendering techniques.

I foresee two basic models [for the Internet]. There is the advertising model, in which advertisers give you something for watching a demo. Then we will have interactive networks, modeled after cable TV, using high bandwidth lines, where you might pay a set fee each month to play games on a network. Potential buyers of video games will also be able to sample new games





**Green Eggs And Ham**  
© Living Books

online before buying it, much in the way that radio allows listeners to preview audio CDs now.

Right now, you can play interactively, in a multiplayer environment, on the Internet, but each player has to have most of their assets on a local machine using a hybrid CD-ROM. As data rate bandwidth increases that restriction will go away and we will see some really new places/games to explore.

#### **John Hughes, President, Rhythm & Hues Studios, Los Angeles:**

Rhythm & Hues has been in the business of creating images with computers for a decade. Our core markets have been commercials, theme park attractions and feature film animation and effects. A fourth division was created when Adam Spindell and Dan Quarnstrom approached the four company owners with a concept for an original game in 1994. The owners immediately agreed to finance the development of their game and the Interactive Game Division was born.

In the feature film market we are best known for our work on *Babe*

for which we won the Academy Award this year. Our most recognized commercial work would be the ever popular Coke *Polar Bears* spots. Our theme park work is showcased by Epcot, MCA Universal, Disney and several Las Vegas venues. And now, our first original game is entitled *Eggs of Steel* and is slated for a Christmas '97 release on Sony Playstation.

The 4 owners and 200 employees are committed to excellence in all of our businesses, on every job we undertake. But being a service-based company operating within tight margins is ever more challenging in the current climate of our businesses. Our goal from the beginning has been to grow beyond the service market and to become a content provider. Our interactive game group is our first attempt to be both the creator and the production company. It is our intention to grow this aspect of our business and to eventually produce a feature-length computer generated animated film, in addition to developing more of our original interactive games.

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# Tim Burton's 'Vincent' — A Matter of Pastiche

by Michael Frierson



Tim Burton from the book *Burton on Burton* (Faber and Faber)

Tim Burton, the director of such popular films as *Beetlejuice*, *Batman*, and *Edward Scissorhands*, has consistently extended a kind of comic book aesthetic into his work, combining childlike fantasy and visual stylization. Like other animators-turned-directors—notably George Pal and Terry Gilliam—his work is visually diverse and rich. Like them, Burton's ability to construct a complete, coherent fantasy world at times overwhelms larger considerations of story and meaning. His *oeuvre* is rich in references

to other films (e.g., *Frankenweenie*), ironic in praise of marginal pop culture icons (*Ed Wood*) and campy in its celebration of cultural ephemera (as in the suburban *mise en scene* of *Edward Scissorhands*). His work mirrors much post-World War II mass culture, particularly the cultural landscape of his home in Southern California. This mirroring process. This ransacking of pop culture places Burton among artists that are now conveniently if ambiguously described as "post-modern."

Mirroring other texts, according to Linda Hutcheon in *A Theory of Parody*, gives artists a method of justifying their own work. She argues that in an age when there is a profound distrust in systems of thought requiring *external* validation, that "Art forms have increasingly appeared to distrust external criticism to the extent that they have sought to incorporate critical commentary within their own structures in a kind of self-legitimizing short circuit of the normal critical dialogue. . . . The modern world seems fascinated by the ability of our human systems to refer to themselves in an unending mirroring process." A close examination of *Vincent*, the first film Burton made with Rick Heinrichs, gives specific support to Hutcheon's claim.

Hutcheon discusses pastiche as one method that contemporary artists use to mirror other texts. "Pastiche" incorporates two meanings that are specifically applicable to *Vincent*. First, it is "a work that closely and deliberately imitates the *style* of previous work," and secondarily it is "an incongruous medley of different styles." More importantly, it denotes a relationship in which the viewer is aware of a background text that the work at hand imitates, the mimicry of another's style.

Specifically, *Vincent* is a pastiche of styles lifted from the writings of Dr. Seuss and Edgar Allen Poe, and a range of movies from B-horror films, German expressionist works and the films of Vincent Price. One could even argue that the techniques used represent a pastiche of 2D and 3D animation methods, particularly UPAs limited animation style. And though Hutcheon does not discuss the relation of parody to the development of the artist, it seems likely that pastiche is one strategy that maturing artist frequently use to legitimize their own work: it is often easier to mimic a style than to establish one's own. Burton was 24 when he made *Vincent*, so mirroring other texts may have freed him from serious consideration of his own style while focusing his directorial efforts on other matters.



## An Early Benchmark

After leaving the California Institute of the Arts in 1979, Burton went to work as an apprentice animator at Disney. Here, he came face to face with the reality of working in the animation industry. He recalled being “strapped to a table all day, and you *have* to draw. I just flipped out.” Working with animator Glen Keane on *The Fox and Hound* (1979), he realized his visual sense was different from the Disney norm; he “couldn’t even fake the Disney style.” His then developed character sketches for *The Black Cauldron* (1980), none of which were used.

Feeling out of place and ready to leave, Burton was given the opportunity to direct *Vincent*, a six minute short based on a childrens story he had written. The film is a humorous look at a suburban boy named Vincent who reads Edgar Allen Poe and identifies with horror film star Vincent Price. The studio gave Burton the go ahead

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**This ransacking of pop culture places Burton among artists that are now conveniently if ambiguously described as “postmodern.”**

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after Price read the story and agreed to do the voiceover.

Price said later that the film “was the most gratifying thing that ever happened. It was immortality—better than a star on Hollywood Boulevard” Though critics found similarities between *Vincent* and *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, Burton says the film “just happens to be shot in black and white, and there’s a Vincent Price/Gothic kind of thing that makes it feel that way. . . . I think

it probably has more to do with being inspired by Dr. Seuss. . . . The rhythm of his stuff spoke to me very clearly. Dr. Seuss’s books were perfect: right number of words, the right rhythm, great subversive stories.” Burton paid homage to Dr. Seuss by writing his story in rhyming couplets. These couplets juxtapose a set of binary oppositions between the melodramatic imaginings of Vincent and the reality of his boyhood existence.

Vincent visualizes his nightmarish fantasies: his aunt dipped in wax, his beautiful wife buried alive, and his dog Abacrombie transformed into a horrible zombie. But at every turn he is reminded by his mother that, “You’re not Vincent Price, you’re Vincent Malloy. You’re not tormented, you’re just a young boy.” The film ends with a tongue-in-cheek citation of Poe’s “The Raven”:

“And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor, Shall be lifted . . . Never-more!” Thus, in a humorous way, the boy Vincent shares with the protagonist of the poem—the student trying to forget his lost Lenore—what Poe himself described as the “human thirst for self torture . . . the luxury of sorrow,” as he melodramatically indulges his dark fantasies. *Vincent* is for Burton the same sort of indulgence, a chance to represent himself on the screen as the tortured boy/outsider/artist. He characterizes Vincent as an artist by associating him with both the easel and the quill pen. Isolated and misunderstood in the grand tradition of the romantic artist,

Vincent engages the darker side of life via the screen personae of Vincent Price, a figure associated with Poe through his roles in Roger Corman’s Poe films of the 1960s.

The film is also an early stylistic benchmark for Burton, whose collaboration with Heinrichs established a pattern of combining 2D and 3D animation within a single film. Heinrichs, who has since collaborated with Burton as associate producer (*Frankenweenie*) and production designer (*Edward Scissorhands*, *Nightmare Before Christmas*), argues that *Vincent*



*Vincent* by Tim Burton  
© Walt Disney

was a breakthrough project “that taught Tim and me that you can combine the really graphic look of a two-dimensional picture with something that works in three dimensions.” The melding of these two modes of animation is found throughout the film, and endures as a stylistic signature in Burton’s later work. Heinrichs says that this notion of combining dimensional and flat animation was suggested by the three-dimensional models that Disney used to provide its animators as reference material.

The film’s combination of 2D and 3D methods is foregrounded by its use of black and white.

Without the use of color to establish spatial separation and define areas of screen space, the combination of 2D and 3D spatial representations is distilled and clarified. Black and white also reinforces the binary juxtapositions throughout the film: Burton effec-

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**Working with animator Glen Keane on *The Fox and Hound*, he realized his visual sense was different from the Disney norm; he "couldn't even fake the Disney style."**

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tively opposes light or high key scenes for Vincent's normal childhood with dark or low key scenes for his imagined torments.

### Psychic Touchstone

The film is a tongue-in-cheek melodrama, a cartoonish pastiche of B-horror movie motifs and Vincent's angst, his exaggerated movements and chiseled facial expressions played against the mellifluous voice of Vincent Price, dripping with mock tragedy. Using Price for the voiceover cements Burton's pastiche of the literary and the cinematic. Poe/Price is Vincent/Burton's psychic touchstone. Burton, who thrived on monster movies as a child but asserts he "never read," frequently invokes Poe/Price as a key figure of his own childhood

[T]he films of Vincent Price. . . spoke to me specifically for some reason. Growing up in suburbia, in an atmosphere that was perceived as nice and normal (but which I had other feelings about), those movies were a way to certain feel-

ings, and I related them to the place I was growing up in. I think that's why I related so much to Edgar Allen Poe. I remember when I was younger, I had these two windows in my room, nice windows that looked out on to the lawn, and for some reason my parents walled them up and gave me this little slit window that I had to climb up on a desk to see out of. To this day I've never asked them why; I should ask them. So I likened it to that Poe story where the person was walled in and buried alive ["The Cask of Amontillado"]. Those were my forms of connection to the world around me. It's a mysterious place Burbank.

Vincent Price was somebody I could identify with. When you're younger things look bigger, you find your own mythology, you find what psychologically connects to you. And those movies, just the poetry of them, and this

larger-than-life character who goes through a lot of torment—mostly imagined—just spoke to me in the way Gary Cooper or John Wayne might have to somebody else.

Throughout the film, Burton mainly uses match cutting to visualize Vincent's identification with Vincent Price, which provides a series of trick transitions between Vincent-as-himself and Vincent-as-Vincent Price. Each of these cuts appear temporally continuous, but as Vincent transforms between himself and Price, the filmic space fluctuates between spatial continuity and discontinuity. In Burton's words, "the film just goes in and out of Vincent's own reality. . . It clicks in and out of reality so to speak." This style of cutting is familiar from UPA cartoons, which often matched character position while backgrounds dissolved from one location to the next. Moreover, *Vincent's* flat, simplified backgrounds show the influence of the stylized spaces of such UPA films as *Gerald McBoing Boing*. Designer Bill Hurtz once described that cartoon as a film "without walls. There are no lines defining the difference between a ceiling and a wall. . . . The props were placed relative to the action; we thought of them as standing characters." Though *Vincent* is less sparse, a similar ambiguity is introduced when checkerboard linoleum appears as a stark wall instead of a floor, or skylights are simply placed in an upper area of the frame. Done in stop motion animation, *Vincent* nevertheless looks surprisingly similar to a UPA cartoon in the simplicity of its stylized design.

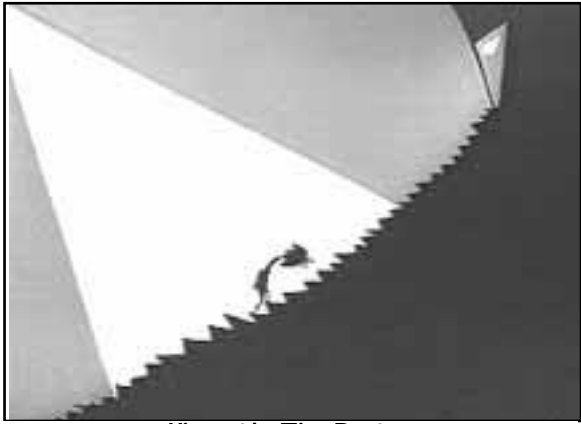


**Vincent by Tim Burton**  
© Walt Disney



## Scene by Scene

The film opens as the camera follows a cat into an empty room where Vincent plays on his recorder a mournful version of "The Hoochie Kootchy Dance"—known to millions of children in its bastardized version by its opening line "Oh they don't wear pants in the southern part of France." Vincent Price, in voiceover, announces that this young boy is "considerate and nice, But he wants to be just like Vincent Price," cueing the first transformation of



Vincent by Tim Burton  
© Walt Disney

the innocent boy to a mustachioed, hollow eyed, sophisticate complete with smoking jacket and cigarette holder. The boy, now posing as Price, exits the room with nose held high, cigarette dangling with disdain.

The film match cuts as "Price" crosses the threshold of the door, maintaining spatial continuity—but in the incoming shot, Vincent has returned to his normal self. In voiceover, the couplet

He doesn't mind living with  
his sister, dog and cats,

Though he'd rather share a  
home with spiders and bats.

quickly cues another transformation back to Price. In this instance

the film match cuts from a shot of Vincent, touching a light switch, to a dark, dungeon-like space where "Vincent-as-Price-as-Mad-Scientist" stands in a gothic pool of light clutching a pull chain for an overhead light. Overlaying the 3D character and set, a group of cel animated bats flutter from the foreground, masking the cut. A minor key organ theme highlights the light/dark juxtaposition, while an unadorned checkerboard pattern on the back wall calls to mind UPAs stylish use of simplified 2D background drawings. The camera tracks with Vincent as he exits right, and a black foreground mask with abstract shaped holes comes into view, eventually blacking out the scene. This foreground masking is one of the more blatant combinations of 2D and 3D animation within the film.

The next shot begins with the mask opening as set of hinged jaws which reveal the "mad scientist," against the same unadorned checkerboard background and surrounded by horrific objects, turning the crank on a jack-in-the-box. As the music box plays "Pop Goes the Weasel," shrunken heads spring from the mouth of a snake. (This snake form is one Burton clearly enjoys, as he brings it back in *Beetlejuice* and *Nightmare Before Christmas*.) Vincent wanders "dark hallways alone and tormented," he leans against a woman's torso. (All of the adults in the film are presented as faceless, figures whose faces extend beyond the frame.) A cut on position brings the film back from his "dark hallways" to high key reality, returning Vincent to a regular kid, leaning against his aunt, who pats him on the head.

Price continues in voice over:

Vincent is nice when his  
aunt comes to see him,  
But imagines dipping her  
in wax for his wax museum.

He likes to experiment on  
his dog Abacrombie,  
In the hopes of creating a  
horrible zombie.

So he and his horrible zom-  
bie dog,  
Could go searching for vic-  
tims in the London fog.

The spatial transformations continue as before, but here the cartoonish gloom descends when the "dark" Vincent, clad in Edwardian lab coat and gloves, imagines hoisting his aunt into a vat of boiling wax and performing Frankenstein-like experiments on his dog. The filmic space becomes more expressionistic as

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**"The film just goes in and out  
of Vincent's own reality... It  
clicks in and out of reality so to  
speak."**

---

the diminutive Vincent searches for "victims in the London fog" in a technically sophisticated long shot that combines stark silhouettes of distorted stairways, shafts of light piercing through skylights, and billowing fog.

The film's binary opposition of Vincent's normal childhood and Vincent's darker obsessions proceeds:

While other kids read books  
like *Go Jane Go*,

Vincent's favorite author is  
Edgar Allen Poe.

Vincent, under the spell of Poe, imagines that his beautiful wife has been buried alive, a reference to Poe's "Fall of the House of Usher."

Burton continues his spoof of B horror films by staging the boy's "tragedy" in a series of grandiose, melodramatic gestures underscored by frightful organ music. Simple sets, cut by expressionistic shafts of lights, give free reign to Vincent's melodramatic actions, as he plays the romantic artist, stricken with grief. Vincent digs frantically to uncover his wife's "grave," unaware that he's destroying his mother's flower bed. Burton again toys with the film's spatial and temporal continuity using a simple light cue to transform Vincent's nighttime "graveyard" to daytime "flower bed," while the boy maintains the continuous action of digging. His mother enters, admonishing the boy, who pokes his head sheepishly from the hole in close-up. Banished to his room, the film reverts to 2D animation to depict a silhouette of a small Vincent ascending a massive, misshapen staircase.

Alone in his "tower of doom," Vincent's romanticized hallucinations become more kinetic and distorted. His mother bursts into his room and tries to get him to give up his morbid fantasies and "get outside and have some real fun." As Vincent's "horrid insanity" peaks melodramatically, lightning flashes and his visions literally begin to swirl around him in an animated version of a Hollywood montage. As the checkerboard walls sway and bend, Burton animates a series of relief sculptures of skeleton hands, his "dead wife" and his dog Abacrombie in limbo light and supersedes them over a swooning Vincent, a montage of spatial

representation systems which interact on a number of levels.

First, the sculptures of the wife and Abacrombie are iconographic forms but rendered in rounded relief, a design in which the outline of the object melds with a sense of dimen-



**Vincent by Tim Burton**  
© Walt Disney

sionality. Second, by superimposing and moving these forms towards the camera in an alternating pattern—frame left then frame right—Burton suggests specters in a manner that has been well codified in B-horror movies. This particular method of staging relief sculptures represents a significant visual technique for Burton, who used virtually used the same approach in *Beetlejuice*, *Edward Scissorhands* and *Nightmare Before Christmas*.

The larger montage, which calls to mind many of the elaborate sequences constructed by Slavko Vorkapich in the 1930s, also combines a close-up of lightning flashes on the 3D Vincent in the foreground against a warping 2D checkerboard background, and a shot of Vincent spinning in the center of the screen. The interplay of these systems for articulating screen space is the result of a

strong design sense applied to the difficulties of combining 2D and 3D animation. Given Disney's overwhelming commitment to the cel animation, melding these techniques is perhaps indicative of Burton's own struggle to pursue his own vision. Burton said that,

Disney seemed to be pleased with [*Vincent*], but at the same time kind of ashamed. I just think they didn't know what to do with it. . . Its like "Gee, what shall we worry about today, this five-minute animated short film or our \$30 million dollar movie?" . . it didn't rate really high on their priority scale. Plus, I didn't even know whether I was an employee then.

Pastiche is a melding of styles that encourages the reader to mark similarity between the text at hand and the original work[s]. Burton's use of pastiche is perhaps simply the easy result of an immature, struggling artist, who finds imitation easier than finding his own voice. But building *Vincent's* larger framework after a Dr. Seuss book seems key for Burton: on first viewing, one has the overwhelming sense of the familiar Seuss style, the same rhythms and rhymes. This strategy seems a conscious attempt to use that familiar to and structure to establish a childlike, storybook world. Once this world is established, his use of pastiche allows *Vincent* to click in and out of a darker mold that mixes Poe, Vincent Price films and expressionism, to adopt the darker style of those works for tongue-



in-cheek humor. For Burton, using pastiche here may have been a strategy of convenience, particularly in the short animated form where extensive characterization and mood development are limited. However, along with other signature traits like interest in fairy tales, graveyards and gadgetry, a passion for themes of duality and the intolerance of suburbia, the use of pastiche ultimately became a hallmark of the Burton oeuvre, for it recurs as a increasingly sophisticated tool for mirroring other texts in virtually every subsequent film, from *Pee Wee's Big Adventure* to *Ed Wood*.

*Michael Frierson teaches film production and theory at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. With his wife Martha Garrett, he has produced short clay animations for the Children's Television Workshop and Nickelodeon. His book Clay Animation: American Highlights 1908 to the Present won the 1995 McLaren-Lambart Book Award for Animation Scholarship. Currently, he is completing a documentary on the life and work of New Orleans photographer Clarence John Laughlin.*

## Production Credits for *Vincent (1982)*

Distributed by Buena Vista Distributing Company  
Walt Disney Productions Present  
A Film by Tim Burton and Rick Heinrichs  
Narrated by Vincent Price  
Written, Designed and Directed by Tim Burton  
Produced by Rick Heinrichs  
Technical Director: Stephan Chiodo  
Director of Photography: Victor Abdalov  
Music: Ken Hinton  
Sculpture and Additional Design: Rick Heinrichs  
Animation: Stephen Chiodo  
With Gratitude to: Julie Hickson, Chris Roth, Dave Allen, Eric Brevig, Chas Smith, New Hollywood, Inc.

## Text for "Vincent"

Vincent Malloy is seven years old,  
He's always polite and does what he's told.

For a boy his age he's considerate and nice,  
But he wants to be just like Vincent Price.

He doesn't mind living with his sister, dog and cat,  
Though he'd rather share a home with spiders and bats.

There he could reflect on the horrors he's invented,  
And wander dark hallways alone and tormented.

Vincent is nice when his aunt comes to see him,  
But imagines dipping her in wax for his wax museum.

He likes to experiment on his dog Abacrombie,  
In the hopes of creating a horrible

zombie.

So he and his horrible zombie dog,  
Could go searching for victims in the London fog.

His thoughts aren't only of ghoulish crime,  
He likes to paint and read to pass the time.

While other kids read books like *Go Jane Go*,  
Vincent's favorite author is Edgar Allen Poe.

One night while reading a gruesome tale,  
He read a passage that made him turn pale.

Such horrible news he could not survive,  
For his beautiful wife had been buried alive.

He dug out her grave to make sure she was dead,  
Unaware that her grave was his mother's flower bed.

His mother sent Vincent off to his room,  
He knew he'd been banished to the tower of doom.  
Where he was sentenced to spend the rest of his life,  
Alone with a portrait of his beautiful wife.

While alone and insane, encased in his tomb,  
Vincent's mother suddenly burst into the room.

"If you want you can go outside and play.  
It's sunny outside and a beautiful day."

Vincent tried to talk, but he just

couldn't speak,  
The years of isolation had made  
him quite weak.

So he took out some paper, and  
scrawled with a pen,  
"I am possessed by this house, and  
can never leave it again."

His mother said, "You're not pos-  
sessed, and you're not almost  
dead.  
These games that you play are all  
in your head.

You're not Vincent Price, you're  
Vincent Malloy.  
You're not tormented, you're just a  
young boy."

"You're seven years old, and you're  
my son,

I want you to get outside and have  
some real fun."

Her anger now spent, she walked  
out through the hall,  
While Vincent backed slowly  
against the wall.

The room started to sway, to shiv-  
er and creak.  
His horrid insanity had reached its  
peak.

He saw Abacrombie his zombie  
slave,  
And heard his wife call from  
beyond the grave.

She spoke from her coffin, and  
made ghoulish demands.  
While through cracking walls  
reached skeleton hands.

Every horror in his life that had  
crept through his dreams,  
Swept his mad laugh to terrified  
screams.

To escape the madness, he  
reached for the door,  
So he and his horrible zombie dog,  
But fell limp and lifeless down on  
the floor.

His voice was soft and very slow,  
As he quoted *The Raven* from  
Edgar Allen Poe,

"And my soul from out that shad-  
ow floating on the floor,  
Shall be lifted—*Nevermore!*"

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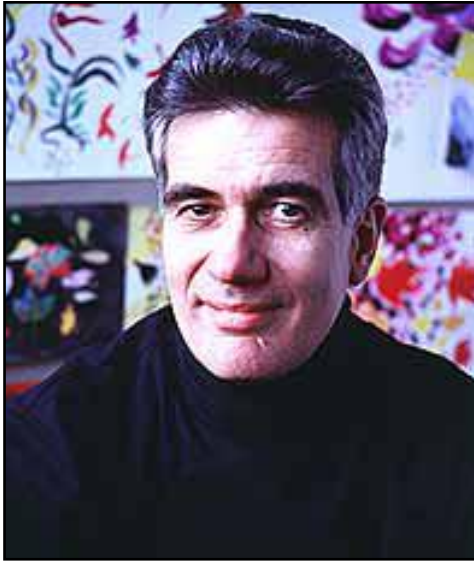
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# The Animated World of John Canemaker

by Mike Lyons



John Canemaker

With all John Canemaker has done in animation, it's difficult to find a title that fits him. He was once called "animation's ambassador at large" and that's probably as close as you'll get to a job description. Canemaker has brought animation's unsung heroes into the limelight, expanded the parameters of the medium and inspires those who are embarking on careers in the industry. He does this all for and with his enthusiasm for animation. "It's one of the great art forms of our time," he says. "It's an art form that incorporates so many other traditional forms to create a new one."

There is, however, much more to John Canemaker's animated world than just history and how-tos. Born in Waverly and raised in

Elmira, New York, Canemaker grew up with animation and became so interested that he made his own animated film in high school.

After graduation, his life took a less animated path and he embarked on a career in acting. In 1961, John moved to Manhattan, where he found success in Off-Broadway, summer stock and over 35 national TV commercials. "When I was 28, someone said, 'Well, you've made all this money what are you going to do with it?'," he remembers. "They said, 'You've never been to college, why don't you go?'"

Enrolling at Manhattan's Marymount College at age 28, Canemaker met a professor who changed his life. Sister Dymphna Leonard heard that John had done some animation and offered him course credit if he'd travel to the Disney Studios and Archives to research and write a paper on the subject, which he gladly agreed to do. "I met all the Nine Old Men, who were all alive at that time," notes Canemaker. "They showed me films and I saw Albert Hurter's drawings and I flipped [the animation drawings of] the Mushrooms from *Fantasia* and I was gone!"

**Everyone said, "You should meet this guy who did Felix the Cat. He lives in New Jersey, his name's Otto Messmer".**

## The Felix the Cat Guy and ...

The trip provided John with full credit and something more. "It peaked my interest in animation," he says, "it whetted my appetite for it and I started to seek out the pioneers of animation." Shamus Culhane, J.R. Bray, I. Klein and Winsor McCays assistant, John Fitzsimmons were among Canemaker's first interviews and during many of these someone else's name



Left to right: Ollie Johnston, Jeanette Thomas, Frank Thomas, Marie Johnston and John Canemaker (on train) December 21, 1983 Flintridge, California

Photo courtesy of John Canemaker

kept coming up. "Everyone said, 'You should meet this guy who did Felix the Cat. He lives in New Jersey, his name's Otto Messmer'."

The meetings between Canemaker and Messmer would change



Marge Champion and John Canemaker, 1994  
ULAD Tytla exhibit, Katunah Museum  
Photo courtesy of John Canemaker

both men's lives. "The first interviews were kind of interesting, because he hadn't been asked the questions I was asking, in a long time," John recalls. "It was as if the cobwebs were being whisked away from his mind. With each interview, he would remember more and get stronger." John reintroduced Otto Messmer to the public as the real genius behind crafting Felix as a personality. (In the 1920s, producer Pat Sullivan's name was the only one that appeared on the Felix shorts, while Messmer worked in quiet, creative anonymity.)

Unearthing all this information about the past initiated a new role for Canemaker, that of animation historian. Creating two documentaries on the subject, *Otto Messmer and Felix the Cat* and *Remembering Winsor McCay*, serving as on-air host for television specials and writing over 100 articles on the subject, John found himself whetting the appetites of other animation enthusiasts as well.

Adding to the unquenchable thirst, Canemaker has authored six books on animation, three of which have been published this fall. The new paperback edition of *Felix: The Twisted Tale of the World's Most Famous Cat*, (Da Capo Press) delves into life at the Pat Sullivan Studio; *Tex Avery: The MGM Years* (Turner Publishing) looks at what could almost be called "animation's Pagliacci", a man who brought the world so much laughter and yet led a very tragic life; and *Before the Animation Begins: the Art and Lives of Disney's Inspirational Sketch Artists* (Hyperion), explores those who set the tone and mood for some of animation's greatest films.

Not satisfied with just creating pretty coffee table books, Canemaker says he strives to uncover the background of the artist in his writing and how their lives impacted on their work. "I'm interested in the humanist aspects, the human story. These people's lives and careers to me are exciting. I've heard some people describe animators as almost being accountants; they sit there with pencils and there doesn't seem to be much going on in their lives, but I think you have to dig a little bit and find out who these people are, particularly the great animators. What makes them great? What elements went into it? Where did they study? Where did they get their ideas from? What was going on in their lives when they created the great works that they did?"

### John Canemaker Productions

Ironically, Canemaker could ask these questions of himself, as he too is quite active in the creative process of animation. While attending grad-

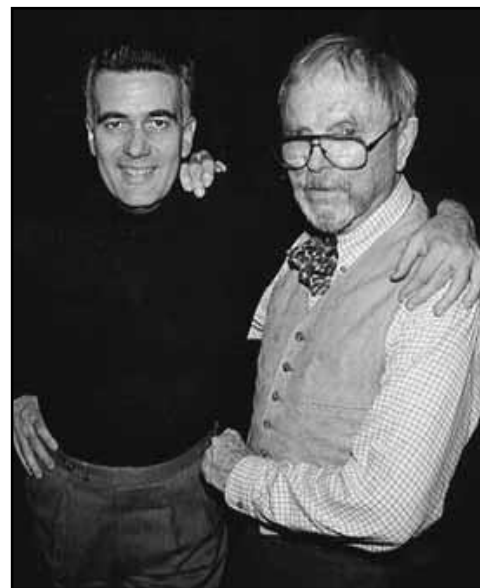
uate school at New York University, his animated film *Greed* (the story of a snail who tries desperately to be other animals) garnered enough attention that Canemaker soon found his skills sought after by others.

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**I've heard some people describe animators as almost being accountants; they sit there with pencils and there doesn't seem to be much going on in their lives.**

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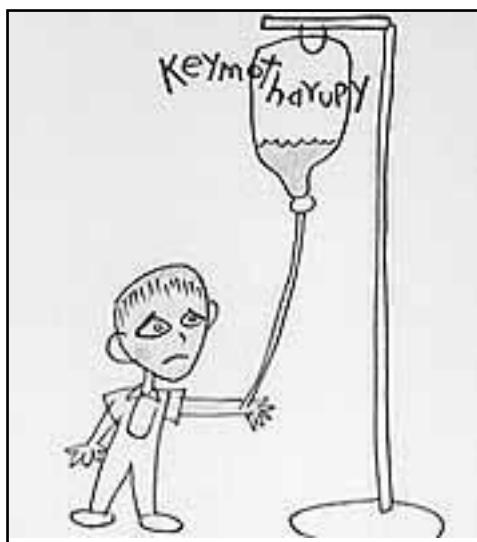
In 1981, he opened his own studio (aptly named John Canemaker Productions) and has since amassed an impressive body of work. His animation has appeared on such television shows as *Sesame Street*, in such films as *The World According to Garp* and in numerous commercials. In addition, John adds his skills to today's new technology, as an advisor at R/Greenberg Associates Digital Studios, where he helps root computer animators in the mediums' traditions. Canemaker has also made several personal films, including his most recent, *Confessions of a Stand-Up*, which received an



John Canemaker and Chuck Jones, December 11, 1991 at New York University.

Photo courtesy of John Canemaker



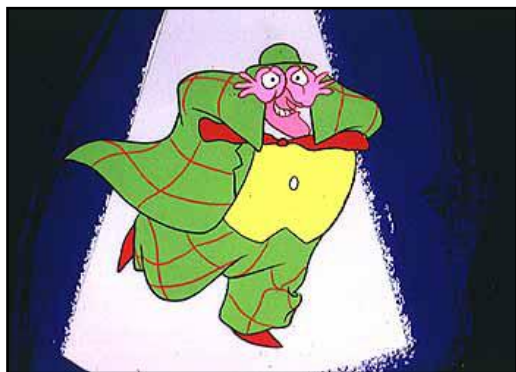


**You Don't Have To Die** by John Canemaker  
© HBO

Emmy Award and directors prize from the International Animation Association.

Working in the creative end of the industry has given John a new perspective. "My being an animator has made me sensitive to the problems people face in their art form. It made me 'feel' the art more when I write about it."

It has also allowed him to push the envelope of animation. Some of John's finest work has been used to convey weightier subjects. In *You Don't Have to Die*, Canemaker's talents were used in this Academy Award winning, live-action documentary about an eight-year-old's struggle with cancer and in the Peabody Award winning CBS TV special, *Break the Silence: Kids Against Child Abuse*, used animation to depict children's horrific tales



**Confessions of a Stand-Up** by John Canemaker  
© John Canemaker Productions, 1993

of abuse. John states that this is the perfect use of animation, which can get inside "people dreams and fears" better than live-action. "I think it can express them in a way that is more intimate and interesting and perhaps, more insidious, than live-action."

As Chair of the Animation Program at New York University, Canemaker conveys these limitless possibilities that animation can provide to his students. "I like the students to see the variety of work and techniques through the years. It gets them thinking," he says. "These are the people who are going to go out and create the medium and this gives them a background to perhaps find a place for their own work." John doesn't just limit his teaching to the classroom, through the years, he has traveled worldwide as guest artist, lecturer and jurist at studios, festivals and universities, sharing his knowledge.

In the past year, he has been everywhere from Brazil to Slovakia and from Disney to DreamWorks. Throughout his journeys, Canemaker is continually amazed by the public's enthusiasm for animation and the industry's current growth. "It really is like a rebirth," he says. "In a way, a generation who grew up with animation, being saturated with it and loving it so much, are now in power positions and I think that has enhanced the interest in animation. The videotape revolution came along and made the history of animation accessible; the proliferation of old cartoons on television has also helped people think of animation constantly. Now the technological revolution, computers, has made it possible to have all forms of animation. Its never going to stop."

From that day when Sister Leonard sent John to the Disney

Studios through today, it's been quite a ride for John, filled with many unexpected and wonderful twists and turns. What's the whole experience been like? "It just keeps going on. Everyday the phone rings and there's something new that people want me to do," says John. "I'm very happy because I'm utilizing my complete self and I'm doing it all in animation."

The ride, however, isn't quite yet over. In addition to teaching and lecturing, Canemaker is currently working on another personal film, *Bridgehampton*, and will soon start writing his seventh book, this one centering on Disney's Story Department. Many would call this overwhelming, but it's all part of the job when you're "animation's ambassador at large."



**Watercolor illustration for MGM's 1948 greeting card, depicting a caricature of Tex Avery and signed by several of his colleagues, an illustration for Canemaker's *Tex Avery, The Great Animation Director from the Golden Age of the Hollywood Cartoon* (Turner Publishing).**

*Michael Lyons is a Long Island-based freelance writer who has written numerous articles on film and animation. His work appears in such publications as Cinefantastique and Sketches, the official magazine of the Walt Disney Collectors Society.*

# Through the Looking-Cel . . . er, Glass

by Linda Jones



Linda Jones

My involvement in the sale of cels from animated cartoons began with a phone call in the mid 1970s from Don Foster, an 18-year pillar at my father's studio in Hollywood. "Hey, Linda. Your dad asked me to call and see if you might help us out with something."

The "something" turned out to be a project Don and my father were working on with Neiman Marcus. The prestigious Christmas Catalogue was about to have its first cartoon character cover: Wile E. Coyote and the Roadrunner. My father had designed and drawn a superb scene with Wile E. chasing a Roadrunner weather vane across a snow-covered roof. The miniature silhouette of Santa and his reindeer flew across the distant, star-studded sky. Don had produced the cel and background, inserted the lettering and mechanicals. It was a thing of beauty, indeed.

Now that Neiman Marcus had

accepted the artwork, my father's discussions with the marketing director had brought up the question of ancillary products which might support the cover.

My husband, Jim, and I were, at the time, the proprietors of a small manufacturing company south of Los Angeles. Although the business was unrelated to the entertainment or animation industry, I had continued my involvement with part-time research, writing and clerking at the studio when time permitted. Our children were almost all grown and off "doing their own things" in the jargon of the day.

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**However, the Valkyries are awaiting those who did it, I'm certain.**

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## A Limited Edition

I agreed to help out and flew to Dallas where discussions with the marketing director resulted in the decision to produce a limited edition "print" of the cover. Because of the particular (and somewhat peculiar) technique used to produce the original art, we decided to produce the "print" in the same way. It would be, in the strictest sense of the word, a fine art limited edition. The line image was transferred to clear acetate via a specific photo-transfer process and each image was hand-painted on the reverse side. The acetate sheets (commonly called a

"cel" in the animation industry) were numbered "one" through "fifty" in the time-honored style of the limited edition. Each cel was signed by my father. They were beautiful!

It had been decided that the matted and framed cels would be sold from the gift departments of the Neiman Marcus stores throughout the country. It was with great satisfaction and delight that I discovered #25/50 hanging in a place of honor and prominence in our brand new NM store at Fashion Island in our hometown of Newport Beach, California.

Around that same time, Ed Summer interviewed my father for a television segment for a local New York program. Ed came to Hollywood with his crew and shot the interview in the offices of Chuck Jones Productions, Tower Twelve, in the Sunset Tower building at the corner of Sunset Blvd. and Vine Street. During a break in the shooting, Ed talked about his little gallery/memorabilia store in New York on Lexington called Super Snipe Gallery. He and George Lucas were co-owners and were constantly on the look-out for interesting and unusual additions to their inventory.

"Why don't we sell some of the cels from the cartoons from the 40s and 50s?" suggested Ed.

"Good thought," Chuck probably replied, "but, unfortunately all the stored cels and drawings from



those films were destroyed."

"No!" Ed must have responded, sitting down with a thump.

"Yes," my father may have replied. "However, the Valkyries are awaiting those who did it, I'm certain. But, how about if I draw some

tion cel had been born.

It was an opportune time, for various reasons (including the impact of the oil crunch on our recreation-based business), for me to investigate the possibility of a new career. Edith and Burt Rudman

of Gallery Lainzberg had visited us on their visits to Hollywood looking for cels for their first animation art catalogue and I had met not only Ed Summers, but Jerry Muller and a couple

of other animation art dealers, who believed that my father's work would be an addition to the market.

I received support from Murray Altschuler of LCA which handled the licensing of Warner characters in those days. He arranged for us to have a restricted license for the limited editions while the legal department tried to determine how we might become agents to sell the production cels from the current (1970s) films my father had produced for Warner Bros.

In the meantime, I was able to begin sorting, selecting, evaluating and distributing cels from the television specials which are owned by Chuck Jones Productions: *Mowgli's Brothers*, *Rikki Tikki Tavi*, *The White Seal*, *The Cricket in Times Square*, *A Very, Merry Cricket* and *Yankee Doodle Cricket*. The first Gallery Lainzberg catalogue featured an image of the wonderful Chuck Jones character, which to this day has no official

name, called the Connecticut Cat from *A Very, Merry Cricket*. A mouse's tail dangles from his mouth.

Of course, the development of the cel business could not have been accomplished without the incredible support and help of my beloved and extraordinary father, Chuck Jones. His financial support made it possible for my efforts to succeed during the first years and his artistic contributions were, without getting too flowery, simply brilliant.

For the first couple of years, I did almost all the grunt work myself. I sorted cels, designed and produced backgrounds for limited editions, handled the orders, deliveries and books. I had part-time help from many dear friends, including several of my children and their friends who gave of their hearts, minds and sweat. I could not have done it without their help.

## Animation Art as Fine Art

In 1983, shortly after splitting off from Chuck Jones Productions and incorporating my own cel art business called Linda Jones Enterprises, Inc., I approached Jack and Caroline Solomon of Circle Fine Art. Together we worked out an agreement which, I believe, was the logical next step in our separate, but mutual efforts to establish animation art



Neiman-Marcus Catalog Cover  
© Jones Enterprises

new drawings and we can make limited editions? I'll sign them and you can sell them?"

"Great!"

## The Duck Dodgers Group

So the first of a series of limited editions was designed (entitled "*Duck Dodgers Group*") and I was again recruited to oversee the production, distribution, and sales. (It was at that time, by the way, that I learned how to "make" stars on a night sky. Don Foster showed me how to spread the sheets of Pantone paper on the floor, squeeze white paint on a hair brush, draw a toothbrush over the surface, spattering a white shower of paint over the firmament . . . what a rush! It worked! And I had "stars" all over my shoes, as well!)

We hand-produced each background with speckled stars and cut paper planet surface.

We quickly discovered that an edition of 500 was overly optimistic, but the seed had been sewn and the idea of the signed limited edi-



Peper Satire  
© Jones Enterprises

as fine art. CFA had been displaying and selling Disney cels for some time and by introducing the art of Chuck Jones, a living artist, beside the production art of the Walt Disney company, as well as popular and established fine artists such as Agam, Vasarelli and Peter Max, animation art took its rightful place as an American art form.

Over the years, I was able to realize many of the dreams and visions which seemed unattainable in the early days. Animation art had become known to many non-collectors. I was thrilled, surprised and delighted to overhear a young mother, passing by a gallery window in Las Vegas, point out to her curly-headed son, "See, that's a cel of Bugs Bunny . . . that's how they make cartoons!" What a change from the early days when I overheard someone at a comic convention, who was passing by a table where cels were being displayed, remark to a companion, "Wonder why they're selling that plastic stuff and how come it's so expensive?" (Those rather spectacular cels, by the way, at that convention, were selling for \$25.00, if my memory serves me well.)

**"Wonder why they're selling that plastic stuff and how come it's so expensive?"**

In the late 1970s, LCA and Warner Bros. worked out a groundbreaking license agreement for us so that we could sell the production cels my father had used in producing recent films of Bugs and

Daffy and Roadrunner and Wile E.

Among those approaches to animation art which we have developed and to which we have contributed are the signed limited edi-



**Duck Dodgers Group**  
© Jones Enterprises

tion, recreated backgrounds for production cels, and one-of-one animation art (utilizing the original drawing to reproduce a one-only limited edition). We were the first independent cel-art producer to exhibit at Art Expo, and have tried always to maintain an integrity to full, character animation which has always been exhibited by Chuck Jones' life and work.

During the next decade and a half, I contributed everything I could to make certain that animation art, cel art, maintained its place in the fine art spectrum and did not slip over into the realm of merchandise. There were many of us working in that direction and looking at the industry today, I am pleased that, for the most part, it still maintains that integrity.

It is with gratitude that I acknowledge my association with this industry. Cel art brings a special and unusual delight to the many thousands, perhaps millions, of peo-

ple who love animated cartoons in a special way. Each cel seems to spark a special memory or moment of delight and bring a lightening of the inevitable stresses and challenges everyone faces.

My son, Craig Kausen, is now president of Linda Jones Enterprises and my son, Todd Kausen, is president of Acme Cel Construction, the production house for the animation art for our company.

We own and operate two wonderful retail galleries: The Chuck Jones Show Room in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and The Chuck Jones Show Room in Corona del Mar, California. Both are staffed by dedicated, intelligent and caring consultants and sup-

ported by a strong and skillful staff at our corporate offices in Irvine, California and Woodinville, Washington.

This industry has evolved and grown over the past eighteen years and I am pleased to be part of it. As long as those who love the art continue to protect and revere it, the world of animation art should have a long and healthy future.

*Linda Jones is COO and producer for Chuck Jones Film Productions in Burbank, and serves as CEO of her own company, Linda Jones Enterprises, in Irvine, California.*



# ✱ How The Grinch ✱ Stole Christmas . . . ✿ and My Heart ✿

by Frankie Kowalski

On December 18, 1966, 38 million people tuned in to CBS-TV to witness the birth of what would become one of the most watched holiday specials in the history of American television—*Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. It was a show that was to become a vivid part of my TV watching childhood. I was troubled by the mean ol' Grinch who was trying to stop Christmas Day and felt sorry for his cute little dog, Max, who endured his cruelties. Yet, the Grinch taught me a valuable lesson, at an early age, that Christmas was not about the most presents I could get, but the amount of love I carry in my heart and about giving it to others.

And here we are 30 years later celebrating the Grinch's anniversary at a benefit to raise funds for the Motion Picture and Television

intimate supporter of the Fund since the 30s, through his good friend Roger Mayer, who is the Chairman of the Fund's Board of Trustees.



The mean ol' Grinch from Dr. Seuss' *How The Grinch Stole Christmas*  
Courtesy of Linda Jones

## **Old Friends Celebrating 30 Years**

At the Four Seasons Hotel in Newport Beach, California, the evenings supporters cocktailed around a silent auction while soaking in an array of original artwork from the show. Patrons were then welcomed to Whoville with the

Fund, the service organization designed to promote the well-being of the entertainment community. It was a natural choice for Chuck Jones, who has been an

merriment of the Southern California Children's Chorus singing "Welcome Christmas" along with a festive feast and tribute to our old friend "The Grinch."



**The Grinch and Max, his canine companion.**

Courtesy of Linda Jones

The event's attendance was a clear indication that to this day it is a classic favorite among many. Seeing dear friends gathered together reminiscing on how it all came about was the sparkle of the evening—Chuck Jones (director), Linda Jones, Roger Mayer (President, Turner Entertainment Company), June Foray (voice of Cindy Lou Who), Albert Hague (composer), Maurice Noble, Phil Roman (lead animators), and narrator Boris Karloff's daughter, Sara.

## Animating the Book

Translating Dr. Suess' book into animation was not as easy as it looks. With great tenacity and a little charm, director and co-producer, Chuck Jones, had finally convinced his old friend Ted Geisel to give him a shot at *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. Linda Jones commented, "Ted Geisel and my father were always fans of each other's work. Ted was reluctant to have anyone animate his books, so he wanted it done carefully and well." Chuck Jones and Ted Geisel first met doing the Private Snafu cartoons about a goof-up soldier made by Warner Bros. for the Army between 1943 and 1945.

Linda remembers as a little girl that Helen and Ted Geisel became devotedly attached to her because they had no children of their own. Linda recalled that, "At the age of 10, I would color with my crayons all over dedicated Dr. Suess books, not realizing that at the time these books were first editions.

When you read *How The Grinch Stole Christmas*, it takes about 10 minutes. Chuck Jones' challenge was making those same rhyming couplets and drawings come alive for television. Jones worked attentively to create the Grinch model based on Dr. Suess' book and choreographed actions that were only briefly mentioned in the book. According to Linda Jones, Geisel was not always entirely satisfied, but knew Chuck well enough to trust him with the character design and the story to make an engaging half hour special.

Linda Jones explained, "Making character animation without any CGI enhancements is an expensive

proposition, but my father insisted on doing it correctly and using the best animators—Maurice Noble, Auril and Richard Thompson, Hall Ashmead and Phil Roman. Good character animation costs \$110,000-150,000 per minute. Factor that by 20 and you realize the money involved. I recall there was a *Variety* review at the time claiming *The Grinch* was the most expensive animation made for CBS-TV. After 30 years, its success is proof it was not waste of money."

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**Ted was reluctant to have anyone animate his books, so he wanted it done carefully and well.**

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The story was expanded from the book with musical numbers like "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch" and "Welcome Christmas" (composed by Albert Hague, lyrics by Dr. Suess and vocals by Thurl Ravenscroft), as well as the Grinch's celebrated sleigh ride and by



**The delightful sleigh ride in Dr. Suess' *How The Grinch Stole Christmas***  
Courtesy of Linda Jones





The "roast beast" feast in Dr. Suess' *How The Grinch Stole Christmas*  
Courtesy of Linda Jones

developing the part of his devoted canine friend Max, who was originally a minor character. I was glad to hear that Chuck Jones made Max a major character because he is one of my favorite characters when it comes to teaching us the true meaning of Christmas.

**Dr. Suess described him as "Everydog—all love and limpness and loyalty."**

Linda Jones put it this way, "Chuck says a good film must have a point of view for the audience. Everyone watching can identify with Max. Even though the Grinch is mean, Max still loves him unconditionally. Max became the audience's point of view." Chuck Jones also points out that, "Max represents all of us. He is very honest, very decent, and a very put-upon dog. Dr. Suess described him as 'Everydog—all love and limpness and loyalty'." Max's agape teaches us to be kind to everyone because deep down inside we are basical-

ly all the same.

### Who the Grinch Really Is

There has been a long standing friendly debate about who the Grinch really is—during the making of the film, Geisel and Jones has occasional arguments about the Grinch's appearance. Linda Jones noted that, "When the Grinch's heart becomes two sizes bigger, his eyes turn a pretty blue (like Chuck Jones) and his complexion turns into a pleasing green. It was a self portrait of my father."

Different cultures have differ-



*How The Grinch Stole Christmas*  
Courtesy of Linda Jones

ent Christmas traditions, yet all their differences are bonded together by one aspect—love. All the Grinch could think about was the noise of children playing with their new toys and the Whos gathered around the tree singing joyfully for Christmas Day. After ransacking Whoville and stealing every bit of Christmas, the Grinch's tender moment happens when he realizes it is not about the noise, or the tree trimmings, or the "roast beast" feast, not even the blissful singing.

Christmas is about love and peace for mankind and sharing it with one another, not only on Christmas Day but everyday. As Chuck Jones put it that evening, "When you work, only the love should show, not the work." *How The Grinch Stole Christmas* has revealed that love for 30 years and will for many more decades to come.

*Frankie Kowalski is Associate Editor of Animation World Magazine and is currently on ASIFA-Hollywood's Board of Directors. She was a recent contributor to Daily Variety's Special Animation Issue. Frankie is now at the World Animation Celebration handling promotions and marketing.*



# La Cambre, an Animation School in Brussels

by Philippe Moins

Translated by William Moritz

Not far from the heart of Brussels, hidden by a jewel-box of greenery, the walls of the 17th century Abbey of La Cambre (now deconsecrated) seems to defy time. In 1928 the architect and designer Henry van de Velde established the National Institute of Decorative Arts there. Partly inspired by the pedagogical principles of the Bauhaus, this college quickly became a major art center for Belgium. A roll call of professors and students at the college from the 1920s until today reads like a review of art during that time—for example Paul Delvaux, Jo Delahaut, Pierre Alechinsky and Folon. Today among the numerous schools that compose the college those of Graphic Design, Typography, Art Direction (Fashion Design) and Animation have made a name for themselves.

## History & Background

The Animation School at La Cambre must be one of the oldest on the continent, since it was founded in 1963-64. At first Gaston Roch and Robert Wolski directed the program, but within a few years they were joined by Raoul Servais, who had also founded an Animation Department at the Academy of Fine Arts in Ghent, the other important animation school in Belgium. Today Guy Pirotte, Robert Wolski, Pierre Lucas and several other teachers follow about 30 students step by step through five years of study in two phases. The first three years include various theoretical courses (Literature, Cinema, Art History, etc.) and parallel practical exercises that make them familiar with the techniques of animation

**The school is not composed of technicians, nor of animators specialized in one particular style of animation, but rather of open spirits, creative spirits who end up finding in one or more techniques the means of expressing their sensibility.**

# Une école d'animation à Bruxelles: la Cambre

par Philippe Moins

Non loin du coeur de Bruxelles, dissimulés par un écrin de verdure, les murs de l'Abbaye de la Cambre (XVIIème siècle) aujourd'hui déconsecrée paraissent défier le temps. C'est là qu'en 1928 l'architecte et designer belge Henry Van de Velde fonde l'"Institut national supérieur des arts décoratifs".

Inspirée en partie par les principes pédagogiques du "Bauhaus", l'école devient rapidement un lieu majeur de l'art en Belgique. Égrener la liste des professeurs et des étudiants de l'école des années vingt à nos jours équivaut à passer en revue l'art de cette période (que l'on pense entre autres à Paul Delvaux, Jo Delahaut, Pierre Alechinsky ou Folon). Aujourd'hui, parmi les nombreux ateliers qui composent l'école, les sections graphisme, typographie, stylisme et animation sont de celles qui font beaucoup parler d'elles.

## Histoire et Environnement

Le section animation de la Cambre est sans doute une des plus anciennes du continent, puisque sa création remonte à 1963-1964. Si elle était dirigée à l'origine par Gaston Roch et Robert Wolski, elle a accueilli durant quelques années Raoul Servais, qui fut aussi le fondateur de la section animation à l'Académie des Beaux-Arts de Gand, cette autre importante école d'animation en Belgique. Aujourd'hui, Guy Pirotte, Robert Wolski, Pierre Lucas et quelques autres suivent une trentaine d'étudiants pas à pas, durant leurs cinq années d'études. Celles-ci se décomposent en deux phases: Les trois premières années comportent un nombre important de cours théoriques (littérature,

films. The students are also encouraged to sample the courses in other schools at the college in order to prevent narrow compartmentalization or restrictive specialization. The last two years are devoted to producing several short films. The production studio, headed by Guy Pirotte, furnishes the students with equipment and space that approximates those of the animation industry. As always, budget shortages often mean that students end up investing their own personal money in projects, but the School does arrange for the distribution of their films, including sales to television and participation in film festivals. (Close to 80 festivals have already programmed films from La Cambre!). While the income from sales comes back to the school (where it goes into the production budget for following years—but never manages to cover production costs completely), the prizes go directly to the individual students.

The infatuation with Animation is such in Belgium that the school must reject many who apply. They can then try their luck with other schools for film or advertising, but La Cambre is unfortunately the only school of animation in French-speaking Belgium.

### Advantages & Risks

Like the Royal College of Art in England or the CFT Gobelins in France, the Animation School of La Cambre is an integral part of a college of fine arts rather than a cinema school. This presents some advantages, but also a major risk: to cut off the students from the realities of audiovisual production, that is, the universe of cinematography itself. La Cambre has partially avoided this danger through the creation of its production structure, by courses devoted to cinema and by its relative technological autonomy, which allows students to work on animation stands, editing tables, in studios and recently with Silicon Graphics. Unfortunately, the number of students and the limited number of machines sometimes pose certain problems.

If one criticism could be leveled at the school, it would have to be for its tendency to favor the artistic side: in certain films, including those from last year, the script, editing and soundtrack give the impression of being secondary preoccupations compared to the

cinéma, histoire de l'art,...). Parallèlement, des exercices pratiques leur permettent de se familiariser avec les techniques du cinéma d'animation. Les étudiants sont également amenés à faire des stages dans d'autres ateliers de l'école, aux choix, afin d'éviter un cloisonnement et une spécialisation restrictifs. Les deux dernières années sont consacrées par chacun à la réalisation de plusieurs courts métrages. Un atelier de production placé sous la responsabilité de Guy Pirotte fournit aux étudiants un fonctionnement qui les rap-

proche des conditions de fabrication professionnelles. Toutefois, l'étroitesse des budgets implique souvent pour les étudiants un investissement financier personnel. Par contre, l'atelier de production permet la diffusion des films vers l'extérieur, assurant le suivi de ventes en télévision et la participation des films aux festivals (près de 80 festivals ont déjà programmé des films de la Cambre!). Si les droits résultant des ventes reviennent à l'atelier (ils sont réinvestis dans les pro-

ductions suivantes mais ne couvrent évidemment pas tous les frais de l'atelier), les prix reviennent eux aux étudiants.

L'engouement pour les métiers de l'animation est tel en Belgique que la section est contrainte de refuser l'inscription d'un grand nombre d'étudiants. Ceux-ci peuvent alors tenter leur chance dans d'autres écoles (de cinéma ou d'infographie) mais la Cambre est malheureusement la seule école d'animation, dans la partie francophone du pays.

### Avantages et Risques

Comme le "Royal College of Art" (Grande Bretagne) ou le "CFT Gobelins" (France), la section animation de la Cambre est partie intégrante d'une école d'arts plastiques et non d'une école de cinéma. Cette particularité présente des avantages, mais aussi un risque majeur: Couper les étudiants des réalités de la production audiovisuelle, voire de l'univers cinématographique lui-même. La Cambre a partiellement évité cet écueil, par la création de sa structure de production, par les cours dévolus au cinéma et par sa relative autonomie technique, permettant un travail suivi : bancs titres, tables de montage, studio et depuis peu, Silicon Graphics. Hélas, le nombre d'étudiants et les



*Madame O'Hara* by Benoît Féroumont, 1994  
© ENSAV La Cambre



artistic ambitions of the students. Even so, that sometimes also makes the richness of their progress.

The great advantage of the education at La Cambre rests in its openness: the school is not composed of technicians, nor of animators specialized in one particular style of animation, but rather of open spirits, creative spirits who end up finding in one or more techniques the means of expressing their sensibility. And apparently they don't do too badly: one thinks of José Abel, who died last year. He was one of the first graduates in the 1960s, and became a very successful animator, in France and elsewhere. He worked notably for Gerald Potterton (*Heavy Metal*) as well as doing special effects for *Poltergeist*. More recently Guionne Leroy, who was a very prolific student in the production studio, has become an animator for John Lasseter (*Toy Story*) and Henry Selick (*James and the Giant Peach*).

Of course, as in every art school, some graduates take an atypical direction that leads them toward areas very far from their original major.



*D'amour et d'os frais* by Celilia Marreiros-Marum, 1994  
© ENSAV La Cambre

## A Delightful Diversity

An analysis of the student films from recent years reveals a delightful diversity of inspiration, with mutual influence, inevitable (and desirable) in the context of a functioning studio. The techniques undertaken also reflect a good diversity. But drawing on paper and modeling clay are obviously the most frequently used. The early 1980s was characterized by a sort of rejection of the avant garde side of the school (the complete name of the department, up until recently, was "Experimental Animation Cinematography"). At that time certain student works reflected a desire to make a "finished product," as polished as possible, some-

limites du matériel ne vont pas sans poser parfois certains problèmes.

Si une critique devait être adressée à cette formation, elle résulterait de son côté très "plastique": dans certains films y compris de dernière année, le scénario, le montage et la bande son donnent l'impression d'être des préoccupations en retrait, par rapport aux ambitions plastiques des étudiants. Cela étant, c'est aussi et parfois celles-ci qui font la richesse de leurs démarches.

Le grand avantage de la formation dispensée à la Cambre réside dans son ouverture: l'école ne forme ni des techniciens, ni des animateurs spécialisés dans une forme d'animation, mais des esprits ouverts, créatifs, qui finissent par trouver dans une ou plusieurs techniques les moyens d'exprimer leur sensibilité. Apparemment, cela ne leur réussit pas trop mal: Que l'on songe à José Abel, décédé l'an passé. Il fut un des premiers à sortir de la section dans les années soixante et devint un animateur très recherché, en France et ailleurs. Il travailla notamment pour Gerald Potterton (*"Heavy Metal"*) ainsi qu'aux effets spéciaux de *"Poltergeist"*. Plus récemment, Guionne Leroy qui fut une étudiante très prolifique au sein de l'atelier de production, est devenue depuis animatrice pour John Lasseter (*"Toy Story"*) et Henri Selick (*"James and the Giant Peach"*).

Bien sûr, comme dans toutes les écoles d'art, les étudiants qui en sortent ont parfois des parcours atypiques qui les mènent vers des domaines très éloignés de leur formation initiale.

## Une Diversité Rejouissante

L'analyse des films réalisés par les étudiants ces dernières années révèle une diversité d'inspiration assez réjouissante, avec des influences réciproques, inévitables (et souhaitables) dans le cadre d'un fonctionnement d'atelier. Les techniques abordées reflètent aussi une belle diversité. Mais le dessin animé sur papier et l'animation de pâte à modeler sont évidemment les plus utilisés.

Le début des années quatre-vingt s'était caractérisé par une sorte de rejet du côté avant gardiste de l'école (le nom complet de la section était jusqu'il y a peu: "cinématographie expérimentale d'animation"). C'est l'époque où certains travaux d'étudiants reflétaient une volonté de réaliser un "produit fini", le plus abouti possible, parfois aussi creux que bien ficelé, chargé de clichés. Cette période semble partiellement révolue et les cuvées plus récentes renouent avec un certain esprit de recherche, tout en consacrant plus



times as empty as it was well made, full of clichés. That period seems to be over, and the more recent vintage are renewed with a certain spirit of experimentation while devoting more attention than in the past to the effective message and the script. In the realm of the classic 3D (clay or puppet), several personalities emerged, such as Kim Keukeleire, Cecilia Marreiros Marum, Guionne Leroy and Vincent Lavachery. They made films with stories, often with humor, and in the case of Leroy, with a sensitivity for movement that predicted her subsequent successes (*Noi Siamo Zingarelle* [*We are Gypsies*], produced in France by Pascavision). Other students branched out by mixing techniques and combining their animation with live-action footage, photography or pixillation (Vincent Brigode, Daniel Wiroth, Sylvia Minnaert).

A tendency toward "Tex Avery," as zany as you could want, is represented by Stéphane Aubier and Vincent Patar, while Benoît Féroumont wields the heavy heritage of comic books without complexes.

Some showed themselves to be illustrators with a personal style (Claude Grosch, Eric Blesin) or technicians of classic design (Philippe Capart, Xavier Dujardin). The impertinent, sarcastic side (that is topical satire) is illustrated by Luc Otter, Martin Koscielniak and Eric Blesin. Florence Henrard and Christelle Coopman give a specifically feminine color to this tendency.

Chosen for competition at Cannes, given a special mention at Annecy, the short films of La Cambre have become a valued commodity in the little world of independent animation. Once they have graduated, some have had no trouble integrating into the world of the animation industry and advertising. We hope the others, independent personal animation filmmakers, will find both the opportunities and enough energy to pursue their singular careers.

*Philippe Moins is the founder of the Brussels Festival of Cartoons and Animated Films. A writer specializing in animation based in Brussels, he was Editor-in-Chief of ASIFA News (published by ASIFA-International), and is now Editor of La Gazette du Loup, a quarterly newsletter on animation.*

scénario. Dans le domaine de la "3D" classique (pâte à modeler ou marionnettes), quelques personnalités émergent, comme celles de Kim Keukeleire, Cecilia Marreiros Marum, Guionne Leroy et Vincent Lavachery. Ceux-ci mettent en scène des histoires construites, souvent avec humour et dans le cas de Leroy une sensibilité du mouvement qui annonçait ses créations ultérieures (*"Noi siamo Zingarelle"*, produit en France par Pascavision). D'autres sont plus branchés sur les mélanges de techniques et l'interaction avec la prise de vues réelles, la photographie, la pixillation (Vincent Brigode, Daniel Wiroth, Sylvia Minnaert).

Une tendance "texaverienne", loufoque à souhait est représentée par Stéphane Aubier et Vincent Patar, un Benoît Féroumont portant sans complexes le lourd héritage BD.

Quelques-uns se révèlent des illustrateurs personnels (Claude Grosch, Eric Blesin, ) ou des techniciens du dessin classique (Philippe Capart, Xavier Dujardin). Le côté impertinent sarcastique, voire situationniste est illustré par Luc Otter, Martin Koscielniak, Eric Blesin. Florence Henrard et Christelle Coopman donnent une couleur spécifiquement féminin à cette tendance.

Sélectionnés à Cannes, dotés d'une mention spéciale à Annecy, les courts métrages de la Cambre sont devenus une denrée appréciée, dans le petit monde de l'animation indépendante. Une fois sortis de l'école, certains n'ont aucune difficultés à passer ensuite dans le schéma propre à l'animation commerciale ou publicitaire. Il reste à espérer que les autres, auteurs à part entière, trouvent à la fois les opportunités et l'énergie suffisante pour poursuivre leurs démarche singulières.

*Philippe Moins est le fondateur du Festival du Dessin Animé de Bruxelles. Ecrivain spécialisé dans l'animation, il était l'Editeur en Chef de l'ASIFA News (publié par l'ASIFA International) et il actuellement rédacteur en chef de La Gazette du Loup, une publication trimestrielle sur l'animation.*

# Espinho 96: Small Is Still Beautiful

by Nedd Willard

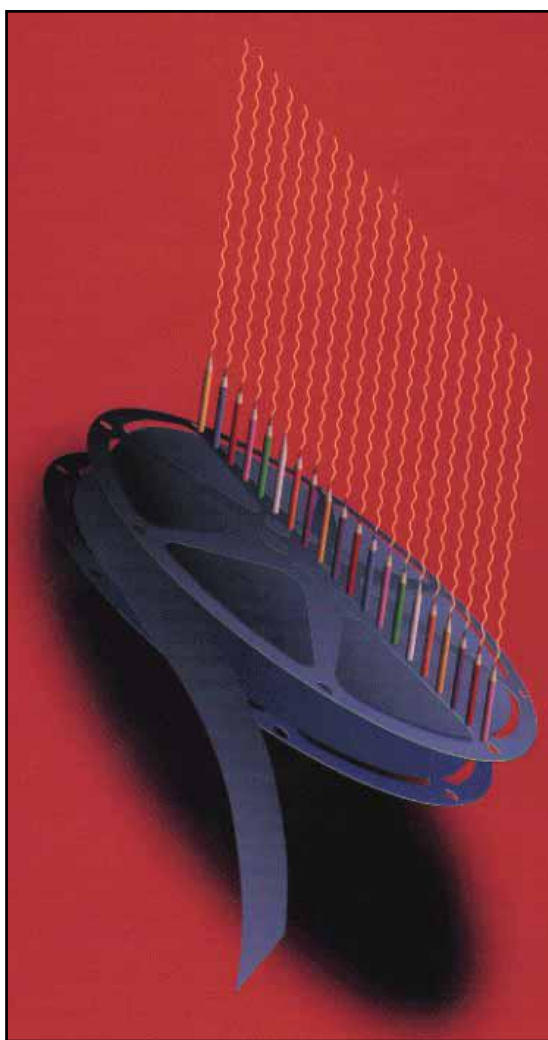
Cinanima 96 concluded on November 10. It celebrated 20 years of bringing animation to this small seaside town in Portugal. In just 5 days the Festival showed why this form of cinema remains the freest, the funniest and the most touching, able to explore areas that real life action cannot reach.

Here are some highlights and lowlights, in my opinion, for those who weren't able to enjoy the screenings that took place within the sound of the Atlantic pounding the beach only a few hundred yards away. Rather than day by day, it seemed a good idea to present the films by country.

## Tight Little Island

England, England, what has Maggy Thatcher done to your youth? The Royal Schools of Art in particular seem to have been affected and depressed during the reign of the iron lady. *Button* by Alan Highfield and Daniel Walls was a grim parable set in a forlorn lighthouse in which a husband destroys any child his lonely wife manages to create, even if it is made of rags and has a button for an eye. *Crapston Villas* by Sarah Ann Kennedy is a savage portrait of city people who seek some form of love and find only derision and ugliness. The characters have energy enough

but lack hope; none of them would you like want to cuddle up to.



Films like *The Lacemaker* by Lizzie Oxby and *Touchwood* by Vivienne Jones, as well as *Asperger and Proud* by Molly O'Neill dwell on human psychology, obsessions and death using excellent skill but in a less than happy vein. Nick Park with

his *Close Shave* proved that there is still some humor and compassion left for human beings, men, women and dogs, no matter how unglamorous they may be.

The United States showed a certain amount of extremism too. For sheer wanton ugliness it would be hard to beat *The Lizard Whomper* by Tennessee Red Norton, where a repulsive man dispatches lizards in the most revolting, raw meat and bloody chunk manner imaginable. He gets his comeuppance but it is hard to care one way or another. All this in 2 minutes and 14 seconds.

So it was nice to see the *Chicken From Outer Space* by John Dilworth continue on its wacky way to spoof the menaces from out there with its unlikely hero, the Cowardly Dog, to defend Mom and the lonely Kansas homestead.

Ah, the Russians! They surprise you as they go from the gloom of Dostoyevsky in *The Dream of a Ridiculous Man* by Alexander Petrov (not in competition) to the puckish fantasies of *Puss in Boots* by Gary Bardin. Both films are about dreams, one of madness and resurrection, the other about poor men drenched in vodka who wreck any form of happiness when they find it. The young hero goes to the court of a French king, meets elegance and admiration, even love,



before losing everything. The cat himself, with his Americanisms in deep Volga accents, is worth meeting and having for a friend.

How short can sweet be? *Home Sweet Home* by Vitaly Bakunovich and Rudan Sirachor from Belorussia, lasts only five minutes to prove that there is no place like home, even if home is a dented empty beer can. The hero, an adventurous bug, finds this out the hard way.

## Surprises From Germany and Switzerland

Germany came through with two prize-winning films. *The Quest*, a first film, by Tyron Montgomery, where we see a desperate search for water through a sterile world of paper, stone and iron. Nice to watch and it has suspense. The other prize-winner, for commercials, was *Free Fall* that takes only 35 seconds to have 2 people on vacation meet, fall in love and out of the plane carrying them, and be saved by a rubber parachute that protects them not only against falls but, that's right, AIDS.

From Switzerland, and more specifically from small studios in Geneva, came *The Release*, a first film by a young woman, Severine Leibundgut, that was sparse, tight and funny where a woman constructs herself from a single line into a fashionably dressed, sexy lady in 1 minute and 40 seconds.

**Free Fall that takes only 35 seconds to have 2 people on vacation meet, fall in love and out of the plane carrying them, and be saved by a rubber parachute that protects them not only against falls but, that's right, AIDS.**

The Grand Prix of the Festival was also from Geneva, *The Year of*

*the Deer* by Georges Schwizgebel and is already a minor classic. Bold painting tells a short but complex tale of how dangerous it is to try to correct some of the cruelties built into nature.

**In just 5 days the Festival showed why this form of cinema remains the freest, the funniest and the most touching, able to explore areas that real life action cannot reach.**

## Other Voices

Spain presented a short film by Mercedes Gaspar called *Las partes de mi que te aman son seres vacios*, translatable as *Those Parts Of Me That You Love Are Empty*. In sequences reminiscent of Schwankmeijer, love is reduced to an exchange of anatomical parts. Another Spanish film, that won the series prize, was *La Buey Negro (The Black Ox)* by Calpurnio Pison. It is fine if you know Spanish. Done with stick figures and muchas palabras, it spoofs the themes of love, death, revolution and pistol play in Viejo Mexico. If you don't know Spanish, you might want to skip it.

Belgium had a serious film, *Sarajevo November 1992* by Stejepan Mihaljevica, but also *An Angel Passes* by Benoit Feroumont, where the intervention of an angel and a devil transforms an unloved wife's existence. It was fast, funny and had some surprises.

France contributed a tough minded film, *The Egotist* by Jean Luis Felicioli and Alain Gagnol, about a man in love with himself and his reflection in a lovely woman's eyes until injured in a car crash. *Words in the Air* was a sugary contrast, where a man throws paper gliders from his window to carry words of love to a lady that

fall into other windows and warm everyone's hearts in a too typical, Year in Provence French village. But an unexpected pure pleasure was *The Great Migration* by Iouri Tcherenkov, a sort of shaggy dog tale about a dumb bird who can't get its directions straight during the annual migration. I also liked *Cosmology* by Maurice Benayoun that evoked our expanding, mysterious universe in a dreamy style, but I may be a bit lonely in my opinion.

Italy was present with a competent film by Bozzetto called *DNA* about what trying to create a perfect man genetically could lead to, and *Fight da Faída* by Vincenzo Gioanola that uses rap music and fast pacing to arouse the public against the gangrene of the Mafia.

Only in a festival, alas, might you have the luck to see a thing of beauty like the *Song of the Sand* by Hungary's Ferenc Cako. The sand told only a vague story but had a wonderful series of compassionate metamorphoses.

## Summing Up:

There were the films, long and short. There were the awards. There were differences of style and opinion. The one thing everyone there in Espinho could agree upon was that animation in all its forms was alive; healthy corpuscles are running through its colored veins and we all want more of it.

*Nedd Willard is a former Senior Information Officer at the WHO, who is currently freelancing in Geneva.*



by  
Harvey Deneroff

Lets face it, there is no avoiding *Space Jam*. Warner Bros. really pulled out all the stops to make sure the film opened big, which it did. In so doing, they finally proved that Disney is not the only one that has the ability to make and successfully market an animated feature as a major event. Thus, the psychological hegemony that was Walt Disney Feature Animation is no more. In this context, it seems rather picky to cast any sort of critical eye on it. After all, aren't the special effects and the marriage of live-action and animation terrific? Well, yes, most of the time, but . . .

The film is a fable telling the real story behind superstar Michael Jordan's decision to return to basketball after trying his hand at baseball. It seems that Bugs Bunny and all the Looney Tunes are taken prisoner by a bunch of Nerdlocks, on behalf of their boss, Swackhammer, who wants to use them to liven up his outer space amusement park, Moron Mountain. Bugs tries to get out of it by chal-

lenging the diminutive Nerdlocks to a game of basketball. The Nerdlocks not knowing anything about basketball siphon off the talent from a bunch of NBA stars to turn themselves into Monstars. Bugs thereupon brings in Michael Jordan

Despite all the hoopla and megabucks budget, *Space Jam* is a rather modest comedy, which aims at a sort of B film sensibility and all the charm that it implies, blended with classic Warner Bros. cartoon characters and situations. The prob-

lem is that the film is too much by the numbers. Yes, all the Looney Tunes are there showing off their shtick. Thus, Sylvester gets off several "Sufferin' Succotashes" and lunges periodically at Tweety Bird. There really is no rhyme or reason for many of these bits, other than that the filmmakers felt obliged to put them in. There is also that same sort of hyperkinetic movement that is

found in the animated portions of *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*—another combination film directed by a live-action director. (Despite the credits, the animation seems to have been done under the personal guidance of producer Ivan Reitman, rather than director Joe Pytko).

However, the filmmakers' biggest transgression is perhaps in

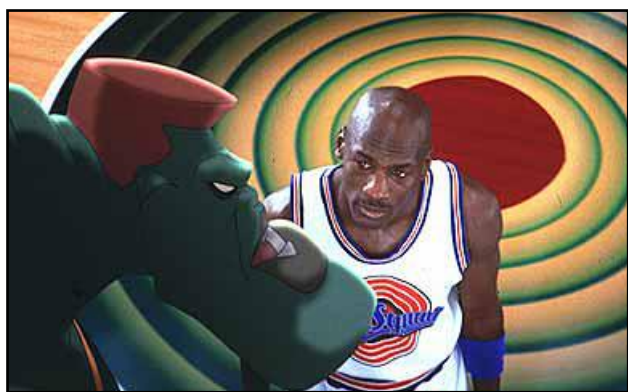


Daffy Duck in *Space Jam*  
© Warner Bros.

to coach and play for the Looney Tunes. Jordan's team triumphs, leading him to decide to return to basketball.

**The two at times seem more like some weightless, oversized balloons, rather than real, living cartoon characters.**





**Michael Jordan and Bang the Monstar in *Space Jam***

© Warner Bros.

the betrayal of Bugs Bunny's character by not allowing him to face up to the Nerdlocks and say, "You realize that this means war!" Instead, they turn him into something of a Milquetoast, as he decides not to fight and helps round up the rest of the Looney Tunes by calling them in for a fake union meeting, where the Nerdlocks have set a trap for them!

The only cartoon character that really comes off is Daffy Duck, here portrayed as a real loony in a melange of how he was seen in his earlier films. And it is Daffy rather than Bugs that is the real star of the film. (After playing second banana to Bugs Bunny all these years, I think Daffy really deserved star billing for his effort; but he obviously does not have the high powered representation that Bugs has.)

Michael Jordan is not really called upon to do much other than being Michael Jordan. There is some



**Lola Bunny of the Tune Squad in *Space Jam***

© Warner Bros.

gentle mockery of his failed minor league baseball career, but he is otherwise there mostly as a foil for the cartoon action.

The blend of animation and live-action is generally rather seamless, though I must admit to being rather bothered by the set piece scene where Daffy and Bugs go to Jordan's house to retrieve his basketball outfit. As they walk through the house, the two at times seem more like some weightless, oversized balloons, rather than real, living cartoon characters. This is something that I've noticed before



**Tony Cervone and Bruce Smith, Co-Directors of Animation on *Space Jam***

© Warner Bros.

with some of the CGI animation in films such as *The Mask* and *Casper*. (I realize most people don't notice it, but I do and it annoys me and destroys a character's credibility.)

Despite my feelings about the film as a film, I am delighted that the film is doing so well. Besides showing that someone other than Disney can play at the animation game, it destroys the illusion that musicals are the only com-

mercially viable genre for animated features. Like *Toy Story*, *Space Jam* is a straight comedy, and thus might induce some producers to realize that they have choices in the type of film they make when they venture into theatrical animation.

Finally, the film should also give a solid boost to the careers of its animation directors, Bruce Smith and Tony Cervone. Smith directed the delightful *Bebe's Kids* a few years back and was responsible for a number of shows in the first season of the HBO fine series, *Happily Ever After: Fairy Tales For Every Child*. Cervone recently worked as an animator on Warner Bros.' *Carrotblanca* short, as well as a number of Steven Spielberg-Warner Bros. TV series, from *Tiny Toon Adventures* to *Animaniacs*.

P.S. If you really want to see a real feature-length tribute to Warner Bros. cartoons in the best sense of the word, try and see (if you can) Richard Williams' unfinished masterpiece, *The Thief and the Cobbler* (briefly released last year in the US in a bastardized version entitled *Arabian Knight*). While it does not use one single Looney Tune, it is perhaps the ultimate Roadrunner cartoon, with the Thief standing in for Wile E. Coyote. Of course, the film had the luxury of having Ken Harris, one of Chuck Jones' ace animators, on the job. But that's another story.

*Harvey Deneroff, in addition to his duties as Editor of Animation World Magazine, edits and publishes The Animation Report, an industry newsletter.*

# Desert Island Series....

## A Little of Dis @ Dat.

**R**on Mann is a filmmaker and CD-ROM author (*Comic Book Confidential*); he lives in Toronto and eats alot of pizza; Sue Shakespeare is President of Creative Capers Entertainment. The next two guys really need a desert island retreat after their long haul—Tony Cervone and Bruce Smith, Co-Directors of Animation for *Space Jam.*, who were kind enough to get their picks in right as we went to press! Thanks guys!



Ron Mann, Filmmaker and CD-ROM Author

### Ron Mann's Top 10 picks ...

1. *The Beat Experience* by Red Hot Organization
2. *Dazzeloids* by Rodney Alan Greenblat
3. *A Hard Days Night* by Richard Lester
4. *Our Secret Century* by Rick Prelinger
5. *Sound Toy* by Todd Robbins
6. *Theatre of the Imagination* by Orson Welles
7. *Who Built America?* by American Social History Project
8. *This is Spinal Tap* by Rob Reiner/Spinal Tap
9. *People Magazine* by Peter Girardi
10. *I Photograph to Remember* by Pedro Meyer

### Sue Shakespeare's ...

"Whats going on today in the interactive animation arena reminds me of the infancy of animation in the 20s, before color and sound. What you see being done today are the tottering baby steps of the interactive animation universe. I have watched it change so much over the last couple of years and come so far in such a short period of time. And yet—this is just the beginning! Its fun to imagine just how far its all going. Its so exciting to have new ways to tell stories . . . to create new characters on the whole new 'ever changing' stage for everyone to enjoy. For me its exciting to be in on something in the beginning...to be on the cusp of a whole new animation adventure."

1. *Rear Window* by Alfred Hitchcock
2. *Star Wars* by George Lucas
3. *Sleeping Beauty* by Walt Disney
4. *Sunset Boulevard* by Billie Wilder
5. *Fantasia* by Walt Disney
6. *Gone With The Wind* by Victor Fleming
7. *Citizen Kane* by Orson Welles
8. *Vertigo* by Alfred Hitchcock
9. *Auntie Mame* by Morton DaCosta
10. *My Fair Lady* by George Cukor



## Tony Cervone's . . .

"I tried to come up with a list of ten Bugs Bunny cartoons that I would bring to a desert island, excluding, of course *What's Opera Doc*, *Bully for Bugs* and *Rabbit of Seville*, because any decent list would include those and decency is the last thing I could be accused of."

1. *Wild Hare* (1940) by Tex Avery—One can talk a lot about the evolution of Bugs' character, but he seems pretty evolved in his first cartoon to me.

2. *Old Grey Hare* (1944) by Bob Clampett—The image of Bugs burying Elmer alive from Elmer's POV is one of filmdom's most disturbing. Enjoy it!

3. *Super Rabbit* (1943) by Chuck Jones—Bugs Bunny plays a super rabbit of tomorrow who battles . . . a cowboy in the Old West. Go figure, Chuck's a kook.

4. *Falling Hare* (1942) by Bob Clampett—Every drawing and every line in this cartoon is memorable. "What's all the hub, bub . . . Bub?"

5. *Little Red Riding Rabbit* (1944) by Friz Freleng—This cartoon puts a nice Warner Bros. spin on a venerable old fairy tale. Watch it for Bugs in all his wise-ass glory.

6. *Corny Concerto* (1943) by Bob Clampett—NASA scientists have concluded that this short has some of the funniest drawings in a cartoon, ever.

7. *Racketeer Rabbit* (1946) by Friz Freleng—When Bugs terrorizes Edward G. Robinson, hilarity ensues.

8. *Baseball Bugs* (1946) by Friz Freleng—An early outing in Bugs' sporting career. We at *Space Jam* modestly tip our caps.

9. *High Diving Hare* (1949) by Friz Freleng—Can an audience ever tire of watching a mean little cowboy fall off a high dive platform." I say thee nay!

10. *Hillbilly Hare* (1948) by Robert McKimson—This cartoon proves the old comedy adage: Hillbillies are funny.

## Bruce Smith's . . .

"Being a director on a film of this magnitude meant being confident and spontaneous, calm yet outrageous, firm and determined, yet loose and humorous. It was all about making a good film, having a good time and never letting 'em see you sweat!"

1. *Uncle Tom's Cabana* by Tex Avery—The very earliest piece of the blaxploitation era with the "get whitey" theme can be traced to this Avery romp.

2. *Dolemite* by Rudy Ray Moore—I love this movie! Killer pimps, nasty women, stupid dialogue, karate, bad continuity and more. Bring on dat desert island!

3. *Magical Maestro* by Tex Avery—Tex at his funniest! Great animation with great timing and sight gags. This movie is retarded.

4. *Which Way Is Up* by Richard Pryor—Pryor's funniest nonconcert film, raw and tacky. A must have.

5. *Rock A Bye Bear* by Tex Avery—Several other shorts were done with this theme, but this one's probably funniest.

6. *The Best of Dr. Buzzards Original Savannah Band* produced by Stony Browder/August Darnell—This music is the theme for anyone stranded on a desert island. Rich and full orchestrations, great lyrics and hooks. Think Cab Calloway meets Goerge Clinton.

7. *King Size Canary* by Tex Avery—Funny, silly and stupid. My only requirements for a great short.

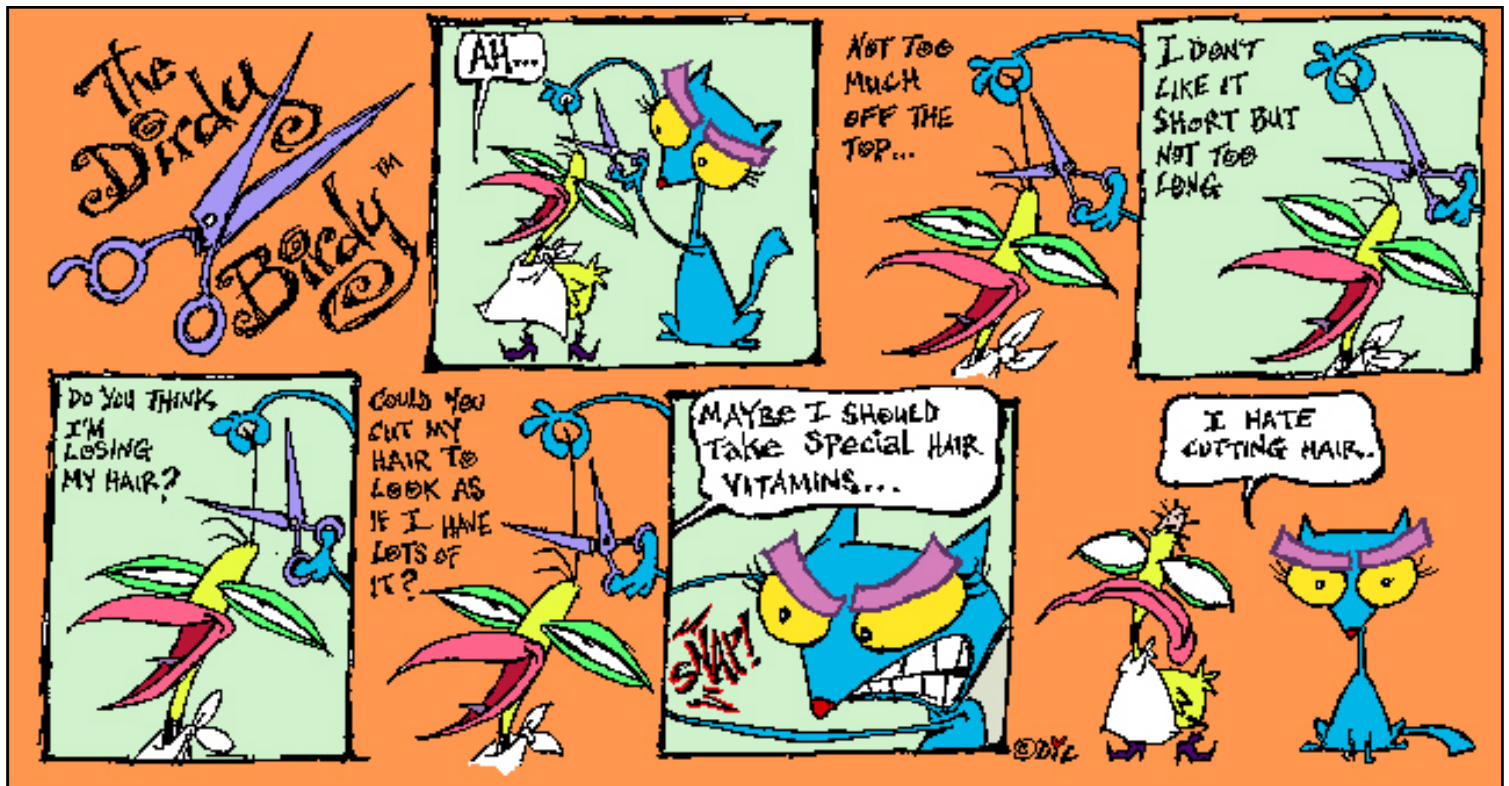
8. *The Great Race* by Blake Edwards—Still my all-time favorite. Great characters, funny story. Fast cars (well . . . kinda fast).

9. *Dumbhounded* by Tex Avery—Revolutionary in its style of animation for this time period. Droopys debut. A classic

10. *Shaft's Big Score* by Gordon Parks Jr.—Corny dialogue and music, but it's *Shaft*. Can ya dig it??



# AWN Comics



**The Dirdy Birdy**  
by John R. Dilworth





# NEWS

## **Fifth International Children's Day Of Broadcasting Announced:**

Over 2,000 television and radio stations from more than 170 countries are expected to participate in the global day of broadcasting slated to take place on December 15, 1996. Coordinated by UNICEF and the International Council of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, this year's event is of special significance as it marks the 50th Anniversary of UNICEF. The purpose of the day is to draw world media attention to children and issues which affect—to spur broadcasters and audiences to "Tune in to Kids."

## **MSH Launches Animation Production Management Software Systems:**

San Francisco-based MSH Entertainment Corporation has a new production management and authoring system, code named Jethro. It is designed to be "the entertainment industry's first open system management scheduling program for the animation business." The new system is designed to provide an alternative to the professional animation standard which up until now has been held by Silicon Graphics and other high cost workstations providers. While developing the system, MSH started utilizing its capabilities to create children's programming. Projections call for two of these projects to be finished by the middle of 1997, with the anticipation that the company will also partner with outside entertainment entities on other projects.

**DIC Will Bring Cosmos Down To Earth For Kids:** Carl Sagan, renowned astronomer who gained acclaim and fame with his *Cosmos*



TV series, has inked a deal to create *Cosmos for Kids* in partnership with DIC Entertainment. The new show, which will be produced by Sagan and fellow scientist Ann Druyan, is likely to be a major component of DIC's plans to help broadcasters meet the instituted guideline of three hours of educational programming a week.

## **Film Roman's Story Of Santa Claus To Air December 4, 1996 On CBS.**

An all-new one-hour primetime animated special produced by Arnold Shapiro Productions (*Scared Straight* and *Rescue 911*) is set to air on CBS on Wednesday, December 4, at 8:00 pm. The story follows the long-ago adventures of Nicholas and Gretchen Claus from their native home in Europe to their small toy shop at the North Pole. There, after saving the life of a young elf, Nicholas is granted his fondest wish, "To give every child in the world a toy at Christmas."

## **The following items are from AWN's November 7th, 1996 email News Flash:**

**Maccurdy To Head Hanna-Barbera As Seibert Resigns:** Following in the wake of Time-Warner's merger with Turner

Broadcasting, Jean MacCurdy, Warner Bros. TV Animation president, will now also head up Hanna-Barbera. At the same time, Fred Seibert has resigned as president of Hanna-Barbera. Hanna-Barbera, which pioneered both prime-time and Saturday morning TV animation in the US, has lately concentrated on making shows for Turner's Cartoon Network and other Turner outlets, including the "World Premiere Toons."

MacCurdy is not unfamiliar with Hanna-Barbera, as she served as its vice president of children's programs from 1983-87, before returning to Warner Bros. (She was director of animation programming at Warners Bros. Cartoons from 1979-83.) At Warners, she has been in charge of developing new shows, managing the studio's classic characters, and heads up the children's programming service that supplies the new WB Network. There is no indication what Seibert's next move is yet; prior to joining Hanna-Barbera, he worked with Viacom's MTV Networks, and was involved with the launch of the MTV cable network.

## **Poor Showings Of Saturday Morning Shows Induce Rebates:**

The sharp decline in ratings for terrestrial broadcasters' kid shows (which are mostly animated series) has been causing networks to give rebates to advertisers as ratings fall short of what the networks had guaranteed. Thus, the WB Network has seen its ratings plunge some 24% for its highly-touted *Superman* series, though there has been some rebound in the past few weeks following some programming changes. (See news item in the October issue

of Animation World Magazine.) The rebates could be as much as \$12 million, while CBS, whose ratings have gone down 45% since last season could be liable for up to \$22 million. (This has spurred rumors that CBS may abandon its Saturday morning cartoon lineup.) While such rebates are nothing new, their scale is. At the same time, ratings for the Nickelodeon and Cartoon Network cable channels have skyrocketed.

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**Fox Gets Rights To *Pippin*:** Fox has purchased the film rights to *Pippin*, Stephen Schwartz' 1971 hit Broadway musical, to be made as an animated feature. The film will be co-produced by John Davis' Davis Entertainment and Dave Phillips' Corner of the Sky Productions. Schwartz' career has had a big boost of late from his lyrics for Disney's *Pocahontas* (for which he won two Oscars) and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. He is also doing the music and lyrics for DreamWorks' first animated feature, *The Prince of Egypt*. He will also write new lyrics and music for the screen version of *Pippin*.

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**Taos Talking Picture Festival: Call For Entries:** The Festival, which takes place April 10-13, 1997, attempts to program in light of the New Mexico city's reputation for having an eclectic mixture of cultures, traditions and philosophies. As such, the Festival is looking for exceptional new independent films and videos, including features, shorts documentaries, experimental, and animation. All lengths and genres will be considered for programming. Of special interest is the Innovation Award of 5 acres of land to be given to a narrative, documentary or experimental film which is 70 minutes or longer.

Entry fees are \$15 for productions 30 minutes or less and \$25 for those

over 30 minutes. The deadline for entries is January 15, 1997. For entry forms, send a stamped, self-addressed enveloped to: Taos Talking Pictures, 216M North Pueblo Rd. #216, Taos, NM 87571, email: [ttpix@taosnet.com](mailto:ttpix@taosnet.com); web page: <http://www.taosnet.com/ttpix/> (Foreign entries please contact the Festival for additional submission information.)

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### **Aardman Scores In International Emmys & Royal TV Nominations:**

Among the International Emmy Award nominees announced on October 31 by the International Council of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences was Nick Park's *A Close Shave* (Aardman Animations) in the Popular Arts category. The show also gained a nomination in the Royal Television Society Crafts & Design Awards for Phil Lewis and Trisha Budd for Production Design—Any Other Program (i.e., not drama); other nominees in the latter category include Sophie Becher for Roald Dahl's *Little Red Riding Hood* (Picture Magic) and Gina Part for *Christmas Shooting Stars* (BBC). Nominees in animation-related categories include:

- Graphic Design—Channel Idents: Lambie-Nairn, *The Disney Channel* (Lambie-Nairn for The Disney Channel); Iain Greenway & Jane Wyatt, *Christmas on BBC2 1995* (BBC); Luis Cook, *Channel Four Strings* (Aardman Animations for Channel Four Television).
- Graphic Design—Titles: Andrew Sides, *The House* (Baxter Hobbins Sides for Double Exposure/BBC); Richard Norley & Grussell Hilliard, *Smith & Jones* (Jump Design & Direction for BBC); John Durrant, *Oldie TV* (Burrell Durrant Hifle for BBC).

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### **The Incredible Mr. Limpet Remake**

**In Works:** Director-producer Norman Jewison's Yorktown Productions is developing a updated version of the 1964 live-action/animated Warner Bros. film that originally starred Don Knott that was originally set in World War II. A new script is now being prepared by Leo Benvenuti and Steve Rudnick, who wrote *Space Jam* and *The Santa Clause*. The project is part of Yorktown's first-look deal with New Regency, which has a distribution deal with Warner Bros. Jewison is best known as the director of such films as *In the Heat of the Night* and *Moonstruck*.

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**The Lion King On Stage:** After debating whether to adapt *The Lion King* as an ice show, a Radio City Music Hall extravaganza, or for the Broadway stage, the Walt Disney Company has decided to go the Broadway route. This marks the second Broadway musical to be based on a Disney animated film in recent years, the other being *Beauty and the Beast*. (Some years ago, before the current Eisner administration, there was an ill-fated show based on *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* that played in New York's Radio City Music Hall.) The decision to do it as a stage play was decided after a presentation by stage director Julie Taymor, known for her experimental work, including productions of *The Green Bird*, *The Flying Dutchman* and *Titus Andronicus*. The play will feature 15 songs, including 5 by Elton John and Tim Rice that were used in the film. The new songs will be provided by John and Rice, along with selections from the *Rhythm of the Pride Land* album inspired by the film and songs by Hans Zimmer, Leo Morake (Lebo M), Mark Mancina and Jay Rifkin. Zimmer and Morake were responsible for the film's background



score, which will be more prominently featured in the play version. The Disney organization is planning to have an 8 week tryout in Minneapolis next summer before opening at Disney's New Amsterdam Theater, in New York City.

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### **Red Rubber Ball To Develop Titles**

**For Living Books:** Atlanta-based Red Rubber Ball, a division of The Nicholas Frank Company, has signed an agreement with Living Books to create CD-ROM titles for the new Little Ark Interactive imprint. The first two titles under the terms of the deal are the kickoff of a series of Old Testament stories told through "art, music and characterizations." The first two stories—*Daniel in the Lion's Den* and *The Story of Creation*—will be done under Red Rubber Balls' children's label, Little Works, and are scheduled to be released in early 1977.

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### **Activision Acquires Minority Interest In Titantic:**

In a move that will enable it to expand into Internet gaming, Los Angeles-based Activision has acquired an equity stake in Titantic Entertainment—a year-old game company started by four ex-employees of Origin Systems, a subsidiary of Electronic Arts. During that time Titantic contributed to such games as *Ultima*, *Crusader*, *BioForge* and *Wing Commander*, and laid the foundation for Origins' forthcoming title *Ultima Online*.

Titantic will now develop a PC-based networked strategy game for Activision with full Internet support. Additionally, Activision will retain the rights to a sequel or alternative second title. This will represent Activision's first game designed specifically for Internet play, one of the hot new areas in the interactive world. However, Bobby Kotick, Activision's Chairman and CEO, noted that

while, "The Internet offers tremendous opportunities, but a successful online game must incorporate design features that offset the technical constraints of the medium today." He adds that, "Titantic's deep understanding of compelling entertainment coupled with its expertise in designing multi-player network games make it an incredibly attractive opportunity for us."

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### **VirtualMagic.Acquires Production Services Divion Of USAnimation:**

VirtualMagic International Productions, Inc., a Vancouver-based firm that provides 3D animation, computer generated imagery (CGI) and digital ink-and-paint services, finalized its acquisition of Los Angeles-based USAnimation's Production Services Division, a leading provider of digital ink-and-paint services. The parties had originally signed a letter of intent back on August 30 and the deal was closed on October 31. Terms of the multimillion dollar deal are not being released.

VirtualMagic says it will continue all operations of USAnimation's Production Services Division in Los Angeles; it intends to keep all employees and plans to "substantially" increase and expand production capacity to include 3D animation and CGI, "with a significant increase in employment." The company has also acquired additional USAnimation software licenses for up to 50 production seats for the Los Angeles and Vancouver operations, and is currently planning expansion into international venues. In addition, the Vancouver facility will add production seats using Toon Boom Technologies' Tic-Tac Toon software. (In August, Toon Boom announced that it was going to merge with the Software Division of USAnimation.)

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### **Cinar Gets Filmfair Library &**

**Facilities:** Montreal-based Cinar Films has acquired the library and production facilities of London's FilmFair Ltd., in a deal worth £10.5 million (US\$16 million) in cash and stock, from the Caspian Group Plc., who bought the company in 1991. FilmFair was founded by filmmaker Graham Clutterback in the late 1960s. The acquisition will add some 200 half hours of children's animation and feature films to Cinar's library, including adaptations of such well-known literary properties as Michael Bonds' *Paddington Bear* and Roald Dahl's *Dirty Beasts and Revolting Rhymes*. The deal will enable Cinar, which produces both animation and live-action shows (*The Busy World of Richard Scary*, *Who's Afraid of the Dark*), to gain a foothold in Europe via a series of Canadian-British co-productions.

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### **Manga Entertainment Staff Appointments:**

The Chicago-based anime distributor-producer has announced the appointment of Greg Forston as National Sales Director and Mike Egan as the company's General Manager. Forston will be responsible for managing new releases and maximizing catalog sales and promotional efforts in association with PolyGram Video and PGD; in addition, he will continue to serve as Theatrical Distribution Direction, with responsibility for theatrical distribution and marketing. Egan, in his new position, will be responsible for day-to-day production, advertising and marketing operations of Manga's Chicago-based headquarters while working with Polygram Video on sell-through properties and marketing activities to retail. Prior to this appointment, Egan served as Manga's Marketing Manager since its founding in 1994.

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### **Mr. Bill's Play-Doh Christmas Special Video Issued:**

Anchor Bay

Entertainment and Sluggo Broadcasting System have offered up *Ho Ho Nooooo!!! It's Mr. Bill's Christmas* for the holiday season in the US. Written, directed and produced by Mr. Bill creator Walter Williams, this 30-minute video guest-stars "Saturday Night Live" alum Father Guido Sarducci (Don Novello). This is the third video featuring the Play-Doh character featured in "Saturday Night Live," though the animated character are now brought to life through the marvels of computerized animation and digital filmmaking. Williams characterizes the new production as a "kind of 'Frosty the Snowman Goes to Hell'." It is set in the Play-Doh patriarch's home on Christmas Eve and takes on "all the Yuletide standards," from tree trimming to caroling, including a "slightly altered version" of Charles Dickens' *Christmas Carol*. It has a suggested retail price of \$9.99.

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**Patlabor, Dancougar & Space Warriors Videos Coming From Central Park Media.** The New York-based company, which specializes in anime, will issue the videos on January 7. *Patlabor: The Mobile Police*—The New Files Collector's Set (5 volumes, \$119.95; vol. 1, \$29.95), created by Yutaka Izubuchi (*Record of Lodoss War*) and Akemi Takada (*Kimagure Orange Road*) is an action-adventure series that centers around the efforts of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department to combat the menace posed by the Labor, humanoid-type machines through specially designed Patrol Labors: Patlabors. *Dancougar Volume 4* (\$19.95) contains episodes 16-20 of the series dealing with the Cyber Beast Force's battle against aliens; *Space Warriors* involves a psychic warrior's efforts to deal with corporate intrigue.

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**Bambi Returns To Video In February:** Buena Vista Home Video will reissue the 1942 Disney film to the American market on February 4, 1997. It will be packaged as the 55th anniversary collector's edition of the last of the major animated features that Disney started before World War II. It is priced at \$26.99 and will be officially withdrawn from circulation at the end of March. Buena Vista also plans to release another direct-to-video sequel to *Aladdin* in August 1997, with the video release of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* also expected sometime next year.

In related news, Buena Vista Home Video reported 21 million orders for tapes of the Disney/Pixar blockbuster *Toy Story*, thus besting the 20 million advance orders received for *The Lion King* back in 1995. However, trade sources feel that final sales will probably fall short of the 30 million copies sold of *The Lion King*. But hey, when you get to these sort of numbers, what's a million copies here or there?

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**The following items are from AWN's November 21st, 1996 email News Flash:**

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**Will Vinton Studios Animates Home Improvement Sequence.** Airing On November 26, at 9:00 PM (ET/PT) on ABC. "The Wood, The Bad and the Hungry" is a four minute segment produced by Will Vinton Studios (Nissan "Toys" spot) and will be combined with special guest appearances of Mario and Michael Andretti. Teresa Drilling, director of the segment, said, "The animators watched several episodes of the series to familiarize themselves with the actors' mannerisms and body language which they incorporated into the animated characters." Tool man, Tim Allen drifts off into a dream sequence while watching a

Christmas special and the Taylors are transformed into animated wooden figures. This stop motion animation took three months to complete; for just one second of film, the puppets need to be moved and shot 24 times. Three animators worked on the three different scenes simultaneously.

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**24th Annie Award Winners Announced:** On November 10, 1996 the Annie Awards, put on by ASIFA-Hollywood, took place at the Pasadena Civic Center. A clean sweep for Disney's *Toy Story*—here's the line up:

- Animated Short Subject: *Cow and Chicken in No Smoking* (Hanna-Barbera)
- Promotional Production: *Speed Racer* (JJ Sedelmaier Productions)
- Home Video Production: *Land Before Time III* (Universal Cartoon Studios)
- Voice Acting: Rob Paulson as Pinky in *Pinky and the Brian* (Warner Bros. Television Animation)
- Music: Randy Newman, Score, *Toy Story* (Walt Disney Feature Animation/Pixar)
- Storyboarding: Barry Caldwell, *A Pinky an the Brian Christmas* (Warner Bros. Television Animation)
- Writing: Andrew Stanton, Joss Whedon, Joel Cohen and Alec Sokolow, *Toy Story* (Walt Disney Feature Animation/Pixar)
- Directing: John Lasseter, *Toy Story* (Walt Disney Feature Animation /Pixar)
- Producing: Bonnie Arnold & Ralph Guggenheim, *Toy Story* (Walt Disney Feature Animation/Pixar)



- Production Design: Ralph Eggleston, *Toy Story* (Walt Disney Feature Animation/Pixar)
- Animation: Pete Docter, *Toy Story* (Walt Disney Feature Animation/Pixar)
- Television Program: *The Simpsons* (Gracie Films/Film Roman)
- Animated Feature: *Toy Story* (Walt Disney Feature Animation/Pixar)
- Technical Achievement: Pixar for *Toy Story*
- June Foray Award: Bill and Fina Littlejohn
- Winsor McCay Award: Mary Blair, Burnny Mattinson & Iwao Takamoto.



Rick Heinrichs, Henry Selick and Jules Engel at the Annie Awards

Photo by Ron Diamond

International Intrigue Sweepstakes, giving players who check out the website a chance to win a trip for two to Paris. *Circle of Blood* takes players to Paris, where they assume the role of an innocent tourist, George Stobbs, who is unwillingly thrown into a complex and dangerous mystery when a medieval manuscript falls into his hands. As George, the player must make a vanguard trip through Europe and the Middle East searching for clues, while encountering exotic characters, fiendish plots, bitter rivalries and ancient objects that will ultimately help him unravel the mystery of the Templars.

In related news, Virgin Interactive's *Neo-Hunter* is on the prowl with a whole new world of sci-fi thrills. Players assume the role of

Rick Gage, an aggressive, self-reliant bounty detective hired to track down the assassin of a prominent U. S. Senator in the year 2095. The involving storyline was created by well-known science fiction writer Orson Scott Card, author of *Speaker of the Dead*, *Ender's Game*, and *Xenocide*. Created by Ronin Entertainment, *Neo-*

*Hunter* was developed by the same team behind *X-Wing*, *Tie Fighter* and the *Super Star Wars Game Trilogy*.

**Gte Entertainment And Cyberflix Announce Launch Of *Titanic: Adventure Out Of Time* On CD-ROM.** GTE Entertainment and CyberFlix have christened their *Titanic* and launched her into the channel. The CD-ROM suspense thriller, *Titanic:*

*Adventure Out of Time*, set on board the doomed luxury liner, features a fully navigable environment that is said to be a faithful recreation of the actual ship. More than two years in the making, the *Titanic* was reconstructed in "digital dry dock" at CyberFlix studios on a row of high end computer workstations. A team of 3D artists fashioned the ornate details and heavy machinery of the Industrial Age behemoth fitting out more than 65 digital sets by "wrapping" hundreds of different metal, wood and other textures over a digital framework that consists of millions of computerized polygons. The finished result gives users the ability to explore the ship from bow to stern, including the magnificent state-rooms, lounges and even a Turkish bath.

***Street Fighter II: The TV Series, Volume 1 Due Out In February 1997.*** "AniAmerica" reports: This top selling video game and originally released in Japan as a weekly TV series, *Street Fighter II: The TV Series* focuses on the exploits of Street Fighter Characters before many of them gained their ultimate fighting skills. Characters Ryu and Ken go their separate ways. Ken returns to America to make a name for himself as a martial arts champion, while Ryu heads home to Kyushu to work as a lumberjack while continue his training.

**Walt Disney Home Video Presents Pixar Animation Studio's *Tiny Toy Stories*.** A compilation of five animated shorts (*The Adventures of Andre & Wally B*, *Luxo Jr*, *Red's Dream*, *Tin Toy* and *Knick Knack*.) created by the award winning studio Pixar is available in the US on VHS for suggested retail price \$9.99.

**Virgin Interactive Launches *Circle Of Blood* With Website And International Sweepstakes.** *Circle of Blood* is a PC CD-ROM Adventure that will lure players into an intense and engrossing plot based on controversial, historical subject matter. The release of the game is accompanied by the launching of the *Circle of Blood* fully-immersive website and

# Animation World Magazine 1997 Calendar

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## January Issue Highlights



Start the New Year off right with Animation World Magazine's Festival issue! Included are an interview with Jean-Luc Xiberras, director of Annecy, the granddaddy of all festivals, while Tom Knott surveys the changing face of festivals over the past decade.

Maureen Furniss reports in from the Ottawa Festivals Selection Committee, detailing the problems faced by both filmmakers and jurors, while peripatetic festival director Otto Adler chimes in on the art and agony of programming. We will also provide a sampling of the thoughts of how various filmmakers view animation festivals.

In addition, Giannalberto Bendazzi takes a look at the latest Italian animated feature, *La Freccia Azzurra* (The Blue Arrow) and a new video compilation of the British films of David Hand, the director of Disney's *Snow White*; John Dilworth takes in *Beavis and Butt-Head Do America*, Wendy Jackson reviews *Mars Attacks!* and the new *101 Dalmatians*, while Hugo scholar Arnaud Laster gives his considered opinion on Disney's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* on the occasion of its French release.



<b>Animation Festivals</b>	(January)
<b>International Animation Industry</b>	(February)
<b>Children &amp; Animation</b>	(March)
<b>Music &amp; Animation</b>	(April)
<b>Commercials</b>	(May)
<b>Education</b>	(June)